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CHRISTIANITY

IN ITS CRADLE.

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PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

UNDER pressure of criticism I hav enlarged Chapter VIII., not without misgiving. I hav long thought that we must wait for another generation, before any complete review of the character and work of Jesus, who has left not a scrap from his own pen, can be successfully undertaken. Therefor I wished to narrate nothing but what the narrators say who ar received as sacred, and by no means all that they say. I hav confessed, and I again confess, on how slippery ground we hav to proceed.

In the problem of pp. 62—3 below, I hav overlooked one possibility; viz., that Jesus himself at some moments thought himself commissioned to overrule and discard the law of Moses, but was not permanently sure enough to avow this distinctly. Thus his parables of patching a threadbare garment with new cloth, and of pouring new wine into old skins, suggest that he then was imagining an overthrow of Mosaism; and equally when he said that no eating of food defiles a man. Nevertheless, he may hav been unable *at all times* to maintain so high a claim, or to declare to his disciples that God through his voice abolished the law of Moses. Without a positiv and distinct avowal from himself that this was his aim, it was impossible for them to admit the thought, while he lived to teach them.

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NOTICE.

In my First Edition of this Book I was under the belief that Editors of newspapers were likely to welcome all omission of useless letters. But this is true only within very narrow limits. I now learn that *to drop final* e *where it is not only superfluous but also misleading*, probably is the utmost that they can advance ahead of the public. To this therefor I confine myself at present, not without hope of elsewhere further pressing for cautious reform of our worst and indefensible irregularities. To the total revolution contemplated by the Pitman-school, I am on principle irreconcilable.

CHRISTIANITY IN ITS CRADLE.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL VIEW OF JUDAISM.

History is a vast topic, of which few of us can know much; yet to know a little correctly is valuable. An obvious parallel is Geography. We must be contented with great ignorance, yet an outline map is superfluous to no one. To study the birth of a Religion is eminently instructiv, yet generally is very difficult from the absence of written documents contemporaneous and trustworthy. So much the more do we need to learn the people and the circumstances under which it rose; which in the case of Christianity are no wise obscure.

These pages do not compete with complete Christian histories, nor attempt continuous narrativ, but only aim to summarize what will throw most light on the topic, and thereby aid to sound judgment.

The peculiarity of the Jewish people has turned on two pivots, *Monotheism* and *Ceremonialism;* and in the secondary stage, which alone here concerns us, each principle has derived its energy from a belief in Sacred Books. In the earlier period, before and during the Hebrew Monarchy, an activ warfare was carried on against Polytheism, to which a majority of the people, surrounded by Polytheistic and Idolatrous nations, was inclined: but the chief champions of the characteristic Hebrew faith were then, not established Priests, but Prophets rising untaught, or reared in voluntary seminaries; men who professed to utter the voice of God,

not to expound any sacred book, or rest upon any sacred law. The name of Moses is hard to find in these prophets, nor do they argue for the doctrin of One God by quoting the Pentateuch or the Decalogue.

An eminent Christian divine of this century avowed that it was scarcely possible to worship a God who had neither place nor form nor geometrical size, so that an incarnate God is a necessary condescension to human infirmity. Nevertheless the Hebrews (indeed, it seems, the Persians before them) had quite dispensed with incarnation. It is hard to understand how any one can read the Hebrew psalms, and not see that an intense devotion of soul to an omnipresent God pervades them.* Even the Roman Tacitus, malignant as he is to the Jews and full of slander, yet seems in spite of himself to admire, when he approaches their absolute monotheism.

"The Jews (says he) apprehend a single Deity, and that "by the mind alone; accounting those profane who out of "decaying substances fashion images of gods into the like-"ness of men, while that which is Supreme and Eternal "can neither change nor perish." From our modern point of view, we must call the attachment of the Jews to the sole worship of Jehovah a *fanaticism*; because it enacted death by stoning for any one who enticed to the violation of this paramount doctrin. But in that day all nations which had an established creed accounted its deliberate violation a deadly guilt. The asperity of Persians against idolatry and the still greater severity of the Jews, denote, not that they were more cruel than Egyptians or Greeks, but that they were more definit and earnest in religious belief.

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* Ponder well that magnificent outburst of devout piety: "Whom hav I in heaven but Thee? there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison with Thee. My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever." Possibly the explanation of "*for ever*" is found in another Psalm; "I will bless my God, *as long as I hav any being*."

But the Ceremonialism of Israel grew up in the Priesthood, which (as apparently in Syria, Asia Minor and Greece) had its origin in unconnected sacred temples, each accumulating and digesting its own routine. When union came about, selection and codification were sure to follow and gain national assent. Jewish history frankly informs us of an era (nearly at the close of the monarchy, while the pious King Josiah was still young) which first established the Book of the Law in permanence.* In the received narrativ there is no indication that any copy of this book was in the hands of the public, or even of the most esteemed and venerated kings. Zeal for Ceremonialism is scarcely found in rulers until this later era. The Passover, and the Sabbatical year, hav no rigid and continuous observance before the captivity. Early kings ministered at the altar, in Jerusalem equally as in old Greece. Levites were confounded with other tribes, and had no actual possession of lands or tithes. Yet a frightful tale is told concerning the very earliest time, in illustration of a law delivered by Jehovah to Moses (Exodus xxxi. 15), "Whosoever doeth any work on the "sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death." Accordingly, for the crime of *gathering sticks in the wilderness* on the sabbath day (Numbers xv. 32—36) Moses himself is represented to hav caused a man to be stoned to death. We may disbelieve the fact and acquit Moses; but it is told in the sacred book: the belief of it by the later Jews cannot be doubted, nor the evil of its belief denied. All other ceremonial offences had a ceremonial expiation; but "sabbath-breaking" was imagined to be a breach

* An exhaustiv analysis of this transaction from the pen of the late Rev. John Robertson, of Coupar Angus, with the title, "The Finding of the Book," was published by the late Mr. Thomas Scott, in 1870. It may not be easy to get this now. In my own history of the Hebrew Monarchy, as early as 1847, I commented largely on the matter, and concluded that to alledge a discovery is to confess an invention.

of the tie which united the Most High to his peculiar people (Exodus xxxi. 16, 17), a breach *of the covenant;* therefore to be worse than most immoralities.

In Ceremonialism of course must be included the rite of Circumcision. But this was imposed in infancy once for all. To be uncircumcised, was in the national estimate a disgrace, as with the Egyptians (Joshua v. 9, Herod. ii. 36), also probably with a majority of the Syrians and Arabians. It scarcely ever could come into prominence. Foreigners had no right to resent it. There is an opinion that nations so diverse adopted this strange practice from a prevailing medical theory. It has no proper place in our history. The Greeks believed it to hav been learned from Egypt; the Hebrews supposed it to hav come down as a solemn covenant and command of God to Abraham. It was cardinal to Judaism, yet not so peculiar as the Sabbatical Law, which forbad labour on the seventh day. One thing ought to be known, on which modern Jews pointedly insist;—that there never was any prohibition of *innocent pleasure and merriment* on the sabbath, nor of *learning and teaching* any form of knowledge, provided only that no money be earned by the teacher. All that is forbidden (they assure us) is servile work and work for gain; but the cultivation of the intellect is highly approved.

CHAPTER II.

JUDAISM RESTORED.

In different national stages Israel had different teachers; first Prophets, next Psalmists (who were apparently a growth out of musicians and priests at the temple of Jerusalem); thirdly, Doctors of the Law, whom we call Rabbis. The earlier priesthood, when it rose above mere

ceremony, was virtually a political element, struggling to enforce constitutional rule on the kings; but seldom on good terms with the prophets. When the monarchy vanished, the Priesthood came into power, and coalesced with the Rabbis, who did not write sacred books, but expounded the older scriptures.

The final conquest of Jerusalem by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar (about 600 B.C.) terminated the Hebrew Monarchy. The policy of the conqueror was, to carry away the whole population and replace it by foreigners; this obviously aimed at destroying the national spirit which resists Imperialism. It gained partial or at least temporary success. It had indeed earlier been carried out against Israel, whether by a Syrian or an Assyrian King: and somewhat later the whole northern district of Palestine was swamped by new comers, various in origin and creed; indeed as early as the prophet Isaiah we ar surprized to read of *Gentile* Galilee. But Babylon, which had assisted the Median monarchy to overthrow that of Assyria, and had eagerly effaced the great city of Nineveh, fell in her turn by the power which she had helped to make supreme. Cyrus the Persian, supplanting the Medes and wielding all their resources, conquered and annexed Babylon; then, by reversing the Babylonian policy won the allegiance of all the Jews. Probably indeed Cyrus, whose creed was Monotheism, felt a true sympathy for monotheistic Israel. He warmly encouraged the return of the Jews to their own land; nay, according to the book of Ezra, he lavishly gave vessels of gold and silver to re-establish splendour in their Temple when rebuilt. So delightful a change of policy roused up a new and glorious prophet, whose book has unhappily been tacked on to the work of Isaiah, which ended with the 39th chapter. The new prophet begins with the joyful an-

nouncement: "Comfort ye my people, saith your God," and continues to the end in a like strain of triumph, though without any hint of life in an after-world for individual saints. This anonymous prophet has so long been quoted as Isaiah, that it is hard to find any better title for him than "the later Isaiah." In obedience to the friendly edict of Cyrus, the most zealous of the nation flocked back. The law of Moses assumed in the eyes of all Israel a dignity and sacredness never before realized. The Jews who were dispersed north-eastward or in Egypt, looked up to Jerusalem with pride and joy, as in the days of David and Solomon. The central figure in that city for three centuries and a half was no longer a military king, but a professed High Priest, guided by Doctors of the Law. The law was in some matters (as other antique law) too severe; but how much better than Greek, Roman, Persian, or Assyrian!

The effects of the DISPERSION were vast and permanent. It had begun in detail by a harassing slave trade, as far as we can judge. In antiquity, to no nation had other nations any human rights, unless guaranteed by treaty and oath. Each preyed upon others as on wild game, even without previous enmity. But the Imperialist King David, son of Jesse, had left rankling hatred in all the petty tribes around. Whenever the Jewish power was weak, marauders infested the land; Tyre and Sidon were activ slave-markets, and every merchant was a slave-dealer. Oh! what hav not been the miseries of mankind in the past! History is the little book of the Apocalypse, sweet in the mouth, but most bitter of digestion. Grievous as ar human sufferings now, they were formerly far wider and more constant, if not more terrible.

A large migration of Jews into Egypt had probably risen out of commerce. Isaiah (xix. 18) expects five cities in Egypt to speak the Hebrew tongue and propa-

gate widely the worship of Jehovah. Some centuries later, when a Macedonian dynasty ruled in Egypt, the Jewish residents confronted Greek philosophy in Alexandria, then the most learned of all Greek cities. Something must hav been imbibed in Jerusalem from that attempt to combine Moses with Plato, which culminated in the theosophy of Philo the Jew. The *word* of the Lord, so often mentioned in Hebrew prophets and psalmists, was compared with the *logos** of Plato. A deliberate effort was made to interpret Hebrew notions into harmony with Greek philosophy; an effort in which ingenuity was sure to overpower good sense, and strained analogies to be mistaken for sober logic.

But the great mass of the dispersed Jews were carried to the north-east, to Nineveh or Babylon. These, whenever they submitted to a rural life, were probably lost among the Gentiles; but when, clinging to their religion and to one another, they abode in towns, their families as they multiplied could only liv by successiv migrations eastward or westward. For they necessarily betook themselves to such employments as still ar familiar with Jews, and indeed with the similarly dispersed Armenians. (It is an axiom in Western Asia that Jews and Armenians cannot flourish in the same town.) From this cause it happened, that in the course of six centuries Jews of every tribe† were found, westward as far as

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* *Logos* in Greek *may* be rendered Word, as in Mark ii. 2, "He preached the "*word* unto them;" but the pervading idea in Plato is, that *Mind* is the cause of whatever goes on "by plan," which plan he calls Logos. Timaeus in Plato (§ 10) teaches that the Universe is a living creature endowed with a soul,—that it is *a god begotten by God* (§ 12), *eternal, perfect, and only begotten* (*μονογενής*, unigenitus.) Philo somehow adapted these epithets to the *Word* of Hebrew poetry.—The divine *logos* in the noble ode of Cleanthes the Stoic means "well ordered plan."

† The modern Jews undoubtedly ar descendants of the *twelve* tribes, as the dispersed Jews are entitled in Acts xxvi. 7, James i. 1. That they ar the descendants of the *two* tribes, is a baseless fiction, with nothing to make it even plausible. The search after "the ten tribes" is an ignorance which has become fanatical.

Italy, eastward we know not how far. The new generations, born amid men who believed in inferior gods and demons, in magic and witchcraft, necromancy and astrology, Furies and Tartarus,—imbibed grave additions to the national creed, even when they steadily retained Jehovah as the sole object of worship. The doctrin of a Devil and fiery Hell, of a future Life and Judgment, of demoniacal possessions and religious exorcisms, did not come to the Jews by *divine teaching*, if thereby we mean Moses and the prophets; for neither in Moses nor in the prophets under the monarchy ar these beliefs found. They were imbibed by the Jewish race during its dispersion among nations, whose superstitions it had despised,—as we despise them. The pedigree of these tenets is open to us and undeniable. The "lying spirit" of Micaiah's vision (1 Kings xxii. 19) and even the Satan of the book of Job, ar (strange as is the notion) base ministers of Jehovah, and cannot be identified with the Christian Devil. In Zechariah iii. 1 and 2, a step forward may perhaps be claimed; but Zechariah wrote in the time of King Darius, four generations after the captivity.

It much excited the wrath of Tacitus, that Jews everywhere looked up to restored Jerusalem as a mother city, and often had great success in converting Gentiles to their higher spiritual faith. He tells it in these bitter and slanderous words: "These ceremonies [of sacrifice] "are defended by their antiquity: all their other insti- "tutions, ill-omened and foul, hav prevailed by their "perversity. For *whoever was worst* [in any nation], "discarding his country's religion, used to carry to Jeru- "salem tributes and petty moneys; whereby the resources "of the Jews were enlarged."

But the restored Jews had much to suffer, both from petty neighbours and from great monarchies. Judæa

was a passage-land between Syria and Egypt, and when the kings of those regions (Macedonian dynasties) fell into conflict, this small territory was trampled down. At length under Antiochus, called Epiphanes, a dreadful persecution fell upon them. This monarch of Syria, Babylon and nearly all Asia Minor, was resolved to break down by violence all their religious scruples; but thereby raised up against himself the Asmonean family; heroes, called by us "Maccabees" (about 167 B.C.), who in the time of this king and his successor, after immense suffering, defeated trained armies vastly superior, and at length established the new Jerusalem in a strength and glory which seemed miraculous.

The gratitude of the Jewish nation foolishly recognized the Asmonean family (that of Judas Maccabeus) as hereditary holders of the priesthood; but the High Priest, being not only head of the Civil Government, but trustee for the public defence, soon became in spirit a military king. Not only were cities in Hollow Syria and Idumea coveted, besides Ammon, Moab, and Philistia, but municipal rights were grudged to Jewish towns. The nation desired peace, and government according to the law of Moses; and to a great extent attained the latter: but like more than one modern European nation, the peaceable desires of the people were sadly thwarted by the ambition of hereditary chiefs.

Tacitus (Hist. book v. ch. 8) thus sums up the account of these times: "Then the Jews placed kings over themselves, who, expelled by the fickleness of the populace, regained dominion by force of arms, and shrank not from exile of citizens, destruction of cities, slaughter of brothers, of wives, of parents, and other enormities usual with kings. These men fostered superstition, because it added the honour of priesthood as a support to their power." This writer loves to retail malevolent

folly concerning Judaism; and his words ar far from depicting the whole case fairly: yet most certainly their priest-kings were the bane of Judaism. Children of a patriotic chief do not inherit patriotism by birth in the purple. It does not appear that they had any standing army except for the defence of the temple and certain fortresses; yet in Josephus's narrativ their facility of getting troops surprizes a reader. Still, this Judaism had another side, widely diverse, of which Tacitus knew nothing. The law of Moses was the national code, and never was so sacredly observed. Its law of land was antique and rational. The land belonged to Jehovah. Each generation possessed and cultivated it in turn, but no one owned it, no one could sell it; only its *use*, until the next Jubilee, could be sold. There was no military aristocracy, no caste of landlords to sponge the tillers of the soil, no pensioned idlers. The aristocracy consisted of the learned,—moralists trained in the sacred law, recruited from all ranks, and (as it is believed) all were taught some manual trade; certainly none of them were disgraced if he so earned his living. From these institutions sprang an energetic patriotic peasantry, brave and devoted; also a highly popular and large class of doctors of the law, chiefly of the sect called Pharisees, who laboured diligently to soften the rigour of antique law by tradition and subtle comment.

Only after the restoration from Babylon did the Jews nationally become devoted to the "Book of the Law" and hereby imbibe that intensity both of Monotheism and of Ceremonialism which sharply divided them from all their neighbours. Their aversion to foreign diet as unclean was a great social separation: their moral shrinking from idolatry was felt by idolators as an insult. A sense of religious superiority as inevitably pervaded Israel then, as it pervades Christendom now: nor is it

wonderful, that to Polytheists who in Art excelled the Jews this people appeared conceited, narrow-minded and unamiable. So indeed did the ancient Christians appear to Romans and others. Polytheists in general could tolerate foreign religions, and fancy that each, rightly interpreted, was right on its own soil; nay, could without compunction allow resident aliens to erect sacred edifices for strange rites nativ to themselves, if morally innoxious. But Jews, while glad to raise temples to Jehovah abroad, could not, at least in those days, willingly endure foreign religion on Jewish soil: indeed their sacred laws forbad it. All this is so like to Christendom, that Christians can ill afford to brand the Jews of that day for too much pride in their nativ religion, too much zeal to propagate it, or too abject a submission to their sacred books. But Polytheists, as known to us by Greeks and Romans, had neither exclusiveness nor any depth in their religious notions. Athenian Comedy bitterly resented serious criticism of the traditional Pantheon, and recklessly slandered Athenian teachers who were thought to undermine it; yet without moral scruple itself made impure fun out of its own creed, nor did any poet shrink from using it as material for wild fancy, and moral aspersion on its gods and goddesses. Of course such Pagans disliked a strict and serious religion, sharply set, morally confident, and eager to proselyte. The same causes seem to make modern Agnostics bitter against Jews, and greedy believers of every aspersion broad-cast on the ancient Pharisee. No one would expect our Agnostics to praise the Hebrews for upholding against heathenism the doctrin that the Supreme Power is righteous and loves righteousness in man: yet some might hav expected far less animosity from Christians, and fairer judgment of those whose excellencies and peculiar points they hav so largely inherited.

In spite of royal pride and violence (for the high-priest at last assumed the title of King) Palestine under the Mosaic doctors flourished greatly, until Roman tyranny galled, tormented and drove to madness a high-spirited and free people.

Soon after the death of that cruel Antiochus the prophecy called Daniel's must hav been written. Criticism for which we hav no room, shows abundantly that the narrativ is opposed to history and truth. The wars of the kings of Syria and Egypt ar detailed accurately in chapter xi. but at the very next step the prophecy *is false:* for, Resurrection of the dead follows, in which Jewish saints rise to everlasting life and glory: all earthly affairs seem suddenly to close. Special remarks on this "prophecy" may here be in place.

This book has astonishing diversities from all the previous Judaic literature. In Ezekiel, in Jeremiah, in the later Isaiah and all the earlier prophets, there is no word to suggest resurrection from the dead or renewed life for individuals. Jeremiah's endless laments hav no assuagement from that topic, which was needed then, if ever, for his bleeding and crushed people. He, like the rest, sees in their sufferings nothing but *the anger of Jehovah*, and *proof of their guilt.* No such idea is found in this book called Daniel's. The saints whom he records by name hav miraculous triumphs over their imperial persecutors; king Nebuchadnezzar (ii. 46) falls on his face and worships Daniel!! Concerning the rest, the tone is jubilant, even in looking forward to a time of unprecedented suffering (xii. 2). "At that time," says the Angel to Daniel, "thy people shall be delivered, "*every one that shall be found written in the book.*" Here the Apocalyptic "Lamb's book of life" is anticipated. It proceeds: "Many who sleep in the dust of the earth "shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame

"and everlasting contempt." This magnificent announcement was unknown to Isaiah and his patron king Hezekiah; nothing like it appears in Ezra or Nehemiah. Then as to his notions of the human world: he represents each kingdom to hav its guardian angel, who is called *its prince.* Michael is the great prince of Israel. Another tutelary angel was "withstood" for 21 days by the prince of the kingdom of Persia, until Michael came to aid him in the conflict (x. 13). "Afterwards," says he, "I must return to *fight* with the prince of Persia "(x. 20) and when I am gone forth, the prince of Graecia "will come." These notions certainly ar not Judaic; apparently they ar Persian. One step more, and the guardian *angels* of Gentile powers were degraded into *demons*, thus completing the Rabbinical idea of "prin- "cipalities aloft," subject to Satan, potentate of the air. Here a vast mass of Oriental mythology corrupted Hebrew simplicity.

In the book of Daniel we also find a Theatrical Tribunal held by the Supreme God. In the Psalms and Prophets hitherto, the throne of judgment was but a metaphor and poetical ornament. *The thrones* ar cast down (angelic or human), the Ancient of Days takes his seat; a fiery stream issues from him, millions (of angels) minister to him, myriads of myriads (of mankind?) stand before him, the judgment is set, and *the books* ar opened,—as in an Egyptian trial? Beyond this, a novel annunciation is made. One like unto *a son of man** comes *with the clouds* of heaven, and receives over all peoples, nations and languages a dominion which shall never pass away. This appears to be the earliest state-

* By some fatuity our translators here write "one like unto *the* Son of Man;" and in iii. 25 give us "*the* Son of God," where the sense clearly needs and the original plainly says, *a* son of God. [Both now corrected in the Revised Version.]

ment, that some one *in human shape*, but *coming in the clouds of heaven*, is to rule permanently over this earth and its inhabitants.—But *was* it the earliest statement? We cannot be sure; for we do not know the date of the prophecy called the Book of Enoch. Concerning this, a few words may be appropriate.

To some of us the chief interest of the Book of Enoch turns on the fact, that in the Canonical Epistle of Jude it is quoted as the writing of Enoch *the seventh from Adam* (14) without any suspicion that it was a recent fraud. German critics, whose pride it is to disintegrate ancient books, think it has been interpolated by Christians. When discovered, early in this century, it was translated by our Archbishop Lawrence. Unless large parts of it ar generated by fraud upon fraud, it may have co-operated with the book of Daniel in preparing the Jewish mind for the idea of *a son of man* who should be *a son of God*, a Judge of the dead, and a universal Ruler over the living. But the idea of Messiah is so important, as to deserve a chapter for itself.

CHAPTER III.

MESSIAH, THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS.

Who can read the miserable tale of Western Asia with intelligence and without sympathy? After nations hav begun to be consolidated, cultivated and softened, they ar again torn in pieces by imperial encroachment. Industry is interrupted, families ar broken up, prosperity is wrecked, those tenderly reared ar carried into exile or actual slavery; national as well as personal love is

trampled down and dishonoured merely for the aggrandizement of some foreigner. The Assyrian, after conquering widely both eastward and northward, wielded a vast population of mountaineers as his weapon for western conquest. But the Medes and Persians revolt, and a Median dynasty rears its head. Babylon joins the Medes, and at length lays Assyria prostrate. Babylon clutches Syria and Palestine; indeed invades Egypt, with no advantage to herself. Cyrus the Persian subdues first in a civil war the Medes, next Babylonia and Syria, finally all Asia Minor and its highly cultivated population of many races and languages. His son conquers Egypt: after his death usurpers arise in ten different centres whom Darius conquers, one by one, in complex war. Darius next crosses the Bosporus and conquers all Thrace (the modern Roumelia), Paeonia and Macedonia. Incensed by Athenian attack (for the Athenians had as yet no understanding of his vast resources) he and his son made war on Greece. The Greeks ar saved by their mountains and by the enemy's pride, and forthwith begin an endless harassing of his innocent and injured subjects. This culminates in the irruption of Alexander the Great into Asia, who perpetrates cruelties and horrors unmatched in the Persian invasion of Greece. On his death, his generals carry on civil war for twenty years, till they can agree on a fourfold division of his kingdom. Great standing armies hav become the organ of empire. Greece has now nominally conquered Asia; but this merely means, that her youth ar dragged from home or migrate to be tools of bloodshed, and her population rapidly wastes. Barbarians whose nerves and hearts ar hard may think perpetual warfare the natural state; but with industrious populations, trained to gentleness and proud of nationality, a series of successiv Empires involves intense suffering.

No wonder that lamentation, mourning and woe came forth from many nations, whatever their religion, with aspirations for *a Deliverer*. What may giv some idea of the suffering of a civil population from capture by even a *Greek* enemy, (and the Greeks were far from being cruel, in comparison with other nations), we hav definit narrativs concerning more than one town, that when it found longer resistance impossible,—then, rather than encounter the fate of being sold into slavery, they killed their wives and children, burned their precious goods, and leapt into the fire themselves, or died on the spears of the enemy. Historians who record such horrors, hav no better comment than to remark,—What madmen and fools they were! As a general fact, whatever the origin of a war, if (as ordinarily) greed of conquest alone impelled the aggressor, yet resistance to his arms was resented and punished as a crime. The nobler the national spirit, the greater the sacrifices it made in defence of its hereditary prince or its rightful independence, so much the fiercer and more unrelenting was its conqueror, both in revenge for his own losses and in the hope of deterring like bravery in others. Thus did ambition in the conqueror demoralize the conquered.

Each nation looked to its own God to support its rights. Each, when vanquished, supposed it had encountered the anger of its God. Not least was this the case with Israel, which never admitted the other alternativ, that its God had proved inferior to his adversary. No Jew could impute to Jehovah military weakness; but every Jew unawares imputed to him the moral weakness of fearing discredit with the heathen, if his chosen people be trampled down. It runs through the whole Hebrew literature, that however much that people may *deserve* chastisement and get it, yet at last, *for the glory of his own name*, Jehovah must exalt them over their

enemy. Hence in national misfortunes, repentance for real or imagined sin blended with intense supplication that Jehovah would avenge *his own dishonor* and send a Deliverer. A like aspiration under other phrases rose in many cruelly oppressed peoples; so this champion, to be sent by God, became *the Desire of all Nations.*

We hav no chronology for the earliest Greek literature, nor trustworthy remains of any of the Sibyls. It here suffices to go back to Isaiah, who wrote when the Assyrian power in Nineveh had become the formidable enemy, both a little before and after the capture of Samaria and the deportation of the ten tribes. He at once anticipates for Jerusalem herself the direst calamities, that ar to sweep off nine-tenths of the people (vii. 11—13), yet believes that from her all nations shall learn religious wisdom. "Out of Zion shall go forth the law: Jehovah "shall become Judge among the peoples: nation shall "not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Calamity had thus taught the elect of Israel a far higher wisdom than that of King David. Among the latest deeds of Samaria, its king confederated with the king of Syria against Ahaz king in Jerusalem. Isaiah tried to inspire Ahaz with his own belief, that these two enemies were not to be feared. In vain he urged that *in a very few years*,—before a certain child should have learned to talk (viii. 3)—the king of Assyria would destroy them both. Ahaz could not afford to wait those few years, but at once sent tribute to Nineveh, and bribed its king to a work which he cheerfully undertook and completed,—the conquest of Damascus. The prophet was fully aware that Samaria would be the next victim (ix. 8-21) and that the Assyrian would overflow into Judæa; but he believed that, before long, a prince of the house of David would overthrow him, and apparently declares that a child just born was

to be the great Deliverer and mighty Restorer. "Under "him a new Eden shall be established, with righteouness "and universal peace (ch. xi.) Ephraim shall be re- "conciled to Judah and all the dispersed of Israel shall "be brought back in triumph."—The last touches to this prophecy must hav been given (xi. 16) after the Samaritans had been carried to Assyria.

It is not imagined that anything here written could carry general conviction as to the real meaning of Isaiah's mysterious announcement (ix. 6), "Unto us a child *is* "*born*, unto us a son *is given*." So much we may say: there is nothing in the known chronology to forbid, and there is much to suggest, that Hezekiah, heir to the throne of Ahaz, was just then born. An inaccurate, perhaps rather a fraudulent, translation deceives most English readers. No attempt to improve it can here be made. It suffices to state, that with German scholars the rendering differs essentially from ours, and that the Jewish translation into Greek, called the *Septuagint*, instead of "his name shall be called Wonderful," &c., &c., has "his name is called, *Messenger of Great* " *Counsel* (or Council): for I will bring peace upon the "rulers and health to him. Great is his rule; and to "his peace no limit, on the throne of David," &c. Nothing on the surface forbids our supposing the prophet to hav expected the realization of his glorious vision by the future reign of infant Hezekiah. *Be that as it may*, we here notice two facts; *first*, that Isaiah predicted a mighty Deliverer and a blessed time of justice and peace; *secondly*, that Hezekiah, though a pious king, did *not* fulfil this hope. The Deliverer was to be a legitimate offspring of David, seated on David's throne; consequently to be an Anointed king. In Hebrew the word Messiah means *anointed:* therefore after the continuous royalty had vanished, the epithet Messiah became peculiar

to the expected Deliverer. The Greeks translated it by *Christos.*

Contemporary with Isaiah, but perhaps younger, was the prophet Micah, who adopts as in choral chant, Isaiah's grand prediction that the Gentiles shall become religious pupils of the Jews (Micah iv. 2, 3) and proceeds to glorify Jerusalem (8) as the centre of coming dominion. Zion shall dash the nations in pieces with her iron horn and trample them down with her brazen hoof: their gain and substance shall be consecrated to Jehovah (13); and though the king of Samaria shall suffer outrage (ch. v. 1), yet *out of Bethlehem shall come the mighty Ruler* of Israel, whose grandeur the prophet further describes.— This is the celebrated text, which declares that Messiah shall come out of little Bethlehem: but (sadly to our confusion) it goes on to assign *as his great function*, the ravaging of Assyria with the sword and turning the now captiv Israelites into a lion among the flocks of sheep.— While Assyria was still a terrible foe, those who revered these great prophets found the interpretation of Messiah to be clear. He was to be Israel's victorious leader *against that foe.* But after the Assyrian power had vanished by Babylonian and Median arms, where and what was Messiah?

The Hebrew Psalms ar full of bitter cries against the men who lie in wait to shed blood. Wild banditti had the land at their mercy for many long years. Prayers against *enemies* painfully color many otherwise beautiful pieces: and a great day is often predicted when Jehovah will avenge his people and rule over the earth (or land?) himself; but it is hard to lay the finger on one which puts forward a military chieftain, like unto Micah's Messiah, as Jehovah's agent and sub-ruler. The seventy-second Psalm most nearly harmonizes with the picture of restored Eden in Isaiah, and ascribes the righteous

rule to a Hebrew king. The last verse, which implies the Psalm to be David's, may be believed, or may be rejected as spurious. That is of secondary importance: the fact remains, that the Psalm does *not* define when we ar to expect this great king, nor how to recognize him *before* he achieves his mighty deeds. The same remark applies to the second Psalm, which in the last verse shows a false translation ("Kiss the Son,") made with a Christian purpose. The LXX. have Δράξασθε παιδείας, "*Lay hold of instruction*, lest the Lord be angry." The king who is here brought forward, the Psalmist magnificently represents to hav been constituted "a son of God," on that day. For this reason he is claimed as Messiah by the Christian writer to the Hebrews (Hebrews i. 6). But that writer also seizes for Messiah the words of the eighth Psalm, that God hath made *man* a little lower than the angels (ii. 6–9): and (what here chiefly concerns us) the Psalm givs us no instruction how to know Messiah when he comes.

The very same complaint may be repeated concerning all the other texts called Messianic. It was therefore natural, indeed inevitable, that the Jewish doctors should be uncertain, and greatly divided, when interrogated concerning Messiah. To reply from Isaiah or Micah was possible, if single verses were quoted, as they would be by the unlearned, who had no access to the entire prophecy; but wise and learned men knew that after the Assyrian power and all the petty tribes contemporary had disappeared, such a reply was folly or fraud.

One collateral prophecy by Malachi rested in the popular memory: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the "prophet before the great and dreadful day of the Lord." According to the narrativ which has been received among the Jews for two thousand years, Elijah did not *die* as other men, but (like Romulus?) was carried up to heaven

in a whirlwind by a chariot and horses of fire (2 Kings ii. 11). Therefore he did not need to be raised from the dead; he had only to come back from heaven. Thus the popular idea accepted him as the *forerunner of Messiah*, since Messiah was to introduce the great and terrible day of God's vengeance.

Another topic must be added. The final prophecy of [the true] Isaiah, given in our books as chapters xxxiv., xxxv., is an intense invectiv against the land and people of Edom. David, if we believe the frightful story (1 Kings xi. 15, 16) had kept his chief captain Joab with all Israel (that is, with his whole military force) six months on Idumean soil, "until he had cut off every "male in Edom." Such murderous attempts never succeed entirely, but they always succeed in bequeathing untractable enmity of the weaker nation against the generally innocent posterity of the stronger. Israel long suffered miseries from Edomite retaliation, and bitterly cursed these enemies, while herself mourning by the waters of Babylon (Psalm cxxxvii. 7—9). It cannot surprize us to find Isaiah, a century earlier, vehement against Edom,—predicting her utter desolation, and the joy of her deserts that nothing but wild beasts and birds liv there (xxxv. 1). It *does* surprize to find this utterance suddenly turn into a quasi-Messianic description of the ensuing kingdom of God. Messiah indeed (*i.e.* God's chosen captain) is not named: but in his own high poetry the prophet declares, "*Then* the eyes of the blind shall "be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped: "*then* shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue "of the dumb shall sing." From these words* the

* Chapter xlii. 7, of [the later] Isaiah speaks of opening blind eyes in very obvious metaphor. It was quite pardonable *there* to believe that *the servant of the Lord* meant an individual Messiah, if one had no means of studying the whole series of the prophecy, and comparing xlix. 3, and other passages.

vulgar managed to deduce that *when Messiah came, he would work miracles of healing.*—That no Gamaliel so reasoned, we may infer with some confidence from Gamaliel's great pupil, Paul of Tarsus; who seems quite unaware of any Messianic miracles.

To turn from Israel to other nations, it is interesting to read Virgil's Eclogue called Pollio, which opens by suggesting that he is reproducing a *Cumæan* song; that is, one concerning the blessed age predicted by the *Sibyl* of Cumac. In Virgil the scene of Paradise does for a moment recall Isaiah to us, as likewise his announcement of an auspicious birth impending. But Virgil's picture is blurred by his dream that history recurs in a circle. The Argonautic expedition is to be repeated, and a second Achilles is to fight at Troy! This sweet poet barely shows how widely spread was the idea that a great Deliverer was about to be born; who would rule over the world with Justice and Glory.

In the pages of Tacitus and Suetonius it is curious to find traces of a Gentile Messiah in the person of a Roman Emperor. The expectation had been widely diffused, that a great deliverer would come from the East. After the tumultuous alarms and suffering from the contests for Empire caused by the death of Nero, Vespasian coming from the Roman armies in Judæa was by many believed to be this mighty saviour. Omens and oracles confirmed the idea, and Vespasian to his great perplexity found himself expected to work miracles on the sick. The two historians are in substantial agreement. Tacitus details two of the cases somewhat more amply, and it may be of interest to my readers to have the whole passage set before them. It occurs in his Histories, book iv. chapter 81.

"In the course of those days, while Vespasian was "waiting at Alexandria for summer seas and safe voyage,

"many marvels occurred, to display the favor of Heaven "towards him. A certain man of the Alexandrian "populace, known to suffer from wasted eyeballs, clasped "his knees and with a moan claimed of him a remedy "for his blindness. The goddess Serapis, whom above "all other deities this superstitious race honors, had "urged him to this step,—and he kept imploring the "prince, to deign to spatter saliva on his cheeks and "eyeballs. Another, who was crippled in the hand, "prompted by the same deity, begged that the foot and "step of Cæsar might trample on his limb. Vespasian "at first laughed at it, and refused; but when the "patients persisted, he at one moment dreaded the dis- "credit of silly assumption; at the next was moved into "hope by their urgent entreaties and by the flattering "cheers from others. Finally, he ordered the physicians "to form a judgment, whether such blindness and such "disablement were within human aid. The physicians "discussed the case on several sides, saying: that in the "blind eye force of sight was not extinct, but only "impeded: that the crippled limb was dislocated, yet "possibly force wisely applied might restore it; that "perhaps the gods had such a result at heart, and a "Prince had been chosen for a divine ministration. In "fine, if the remedy succeeded, Cæsar would win the "glory: if it failed, the poor wretches would hav to "bear the ridicule. Thereupon Vespasian, thinking all "things open to his fortune, and nothing any longer "incredible, put on a joyful countenance, and while the "crowd around gave earnest attention, performed the "bidding [of the patients.] Instantly the hand became "manageable, and light re-illumined the blind eye. "Each fact is asserted by bystanders, up to the present "day, when falsehood has nothing to gain."—So far Tacitus. As he probably wrote full thirty years later, it

is open to conjecture that in place of "bystanders" he ought to hav written, "those who ar said to profess to "hav been present."

But it is a fair inference that a belief had gone widely abroad in Western Asia and Egypt, even reaching to the Greek and Italian Sibyls, that a great Deliverer was to come from the East; also, that when he came, he would work miracles of healing on various classes of disease. No other *note of Messiah* can be named as popular in Asia.

CHAPTER IV.

ROMAN CONQUEST OF JUDÆA.

The Greek monarchy in Syria received its first shock from the Romans (B.C. 190) under the two Scipios, which established in Asia Roman power from the coast to Mount Taurus. After this their predominance was undisputed, until their own Italian and domestic conflicts emboldened the Greek cities to insurrection, aided by Mithridates, king of Pontus or Cappadocia. This war lingered on until in B.C. 66 Pompey the Great was sent to conduct it, then at the height of his celebrity for his wonderful rapidity of success against the ubiquitous pirates of the seas. He was eminently mild and humane; but, entrusted with a great army, he was quite aware that more would be expected of him in Rome than to put the last stroke to an old war. He had traversed Armenia and approached the Caspian Sea, but now resolved to march into Syria. He did so, and conquered

it from north to south; deposed the XIth Antiochus, and made a present of Syria and Palestine to the Roman people.

The Romans had been glad to win the Jews as allies against kings of Syria, and ordinarily accounted allies as a second morsel to be devoured. But this time the foreiner invited the Roman commander in. There were three parties in Jerusalem; a popular party which disliked royalty, and two brothers, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, in civil war for the pontifical throne. Pompey listened to the pleas of all three, but deferred his verdict until he could hear what the Idumean chief Aretas, ally of the *elder* brother Hyrcanus, had to plead. Meanwhile Pompey commanded abstinence from warlike action. Aristobulus was too fierce, or dreaded to lose all by losing time. His disobedience and activity seem to hav thrown Pompey on to the side of Hyrcanus. Before long, the Romans found self-defence needful, and a stubborn conflict ensued. Though Hyrcanus largely controuled the rural populace, and had many partizans in Jerusalem itself, yet from no city in Syria did Pompey meet with resistance so formidable. These Jews were stricter in observance of the sabbath than those of Maccabean times. At the earlier era, when it was perceived that to allow the enemy's works to proceed without molestation during the sabbath, was to yield themselves to slaughter, they had worked against him in those sacred hours, though reluctantly. But Pompey, besides important aid from one faction, encountered men too scrupulous to work against him on the sabbath; who indeed calmly continued their incense, their sacrifices or expiation, while slaughtered by his missiles. Finally, only in the third month of his siege was he able to surmount the inner wall of the temple, though at the head of a veteran army. He marvelled at the scene, as

we in reading of it. He is not likely to hav reflected, as we do, on the mischiefs of a sacred code, which none may criticize and improve.

Much as we must honor the self-devotion of those Jews, it is clear that Reverence paralyzed their intellect. Men's good sense will struggle upwards against a misplaced reverence. Sacredness of the letter therefore generates a perverse logic, just as in lawyers whose problem it is to reconcile a barbarous code with maturer judgments. Fanciful analogies, arbitrary presumptions, subtle distinctions ar invoked and approved, in aid of justice or mercy. In the Mosaic books religion, law, medicin, agriculture were interfused. Gentile beliefs were superadded: out of this mass the Rabbi had to hammer results that satisfy utility and wisdom; and every bigot had advantage over a larger-hearted expounder. From this system proceeded much heroism and fanatical energy, also much crooked subtlety of the moderate and comparativly wise.

Pompey from curiosity entered the Holy of Holies, but refused to plunder the gold of the temple, and restrained his soldiers from violence. From rudeness and insult to Jewish scruples, to restrain them was impossible. Moreover the eagles on his standard, being worshipped as idols, were a dire abomination. Their very entrance into the Holy City was an affliction to Jewish sentiment.

This new conquest by an idolatrous foe was a painful wound, after a century of belief that under Jehovah's protection Jehovah's people were safe. Severe doubts awoke as to the lawfulness of professing allegiance. The book of Deuteronomy seemed expressly to forbid; for (xvii. 11) in allowing them to choose a king it imposes two conditions, *first*, the king must be the man whom Jehovah shall choose—(therefore could not be an idolater);

next, he must be "one of thy brethren; but a stranger "thou mayest not set over thee, who is not thy brother." This prohibition was to many decisiv. Besides, a fine Psalm (cxxv.) givs a powerful moral reason. The sceptre of the wicked shall not rest on the lot of the righteous, *lest the righteous put forth his hand to injustice.* From every province the Roman rule tore away the young men to fight in aggressiv wars against distant peoples. Jehovah seemed to affirm that he rested "like "the mountains around his people," to shield them from this base subservience. Tender consciences were pierced by this liability. Brave and ardent souls must hav braced themselves, like our Quakers, to refuse it, and to deny the rightfulness of allegiance and loyalty. Not many of the wisest would see how to reconcile the command of the law with the dictates of prudence; nor how in sincerity to make professions which the conqueror would not interpret to mean, "We shall rebel as soon as we "dare,"—if nothing but inability to resist justified submission. That the religion was an intense explosiv, was soon manifest, and the Romans felt towards it, in vehement combination, Fear, Disgust and Hatred. How else feel Britons toward Islam in India?

After so difficult a conquest, no one will wonder that heavier tribute was laid on the Jews than on the Syrian towns. Romans indeed could justify this by a very peculiar reason. Because of suspension of culture in the sabbatical *year*, it was impossible to collect taxes. Therefore if in six years they collected seven years' revenu, they did nothing unfair to this eccentric people. At the same time it gave a new stone to fling at the Jews, as *lovers of idleness.*

Pompey, with his uniform humanity, tried to conciliate good will, and to arrange all things by healing measures. After his departure, first a son of Aristobulus, next the

father himself, escaping from Roman captivity, renewed civil war, with nothing but distress to the Jews. Presently, the Roman consul Crassus plundered all the treasures which Pompey had spared, and perished with the chief part of his army in an expedition against the Parthians. Tranquillity was chiefly restored through the energy and sagacity of an Edomite prince, Antipater, son-in-law to a powerful Arabian chieftain. Apparently he belonged to the part of Idumea which had accepted with circumcision the whole Mosaic ceremonial; so that he and his family passed as Jews. He had been a vehement and serviceable partizan of Hyrcanus and Pompey; but after civil war had divided the Romans and Pompey was murdered in Egypt, he quickly espoused the side of Cæsar, and rendered him signal service in a dangerous crisis. For this he was made prefect of Judæa, and conducted affairs cautiously through the terrible struggle which still convulsed the empire. His son is known to us as Herod the Great.

The ascent of Herod to power was singularly rapid. His father made him governor of Galilee when he was twenty-five years old. Sextus Cæsar, being temporarily in command, added to him the rule over Hollow Syria, B.C. 43. Driven out by the Parthians, who invaded Syria after their success against Crassus, he escaped to Rome. By large bribes he had previously won favor with Mark Antony, whose influence now gained for him the title, King of Judæa. But to turn the name into a fact, a new war was needed, and a new capture of unhappy Jerusalem. His actual reign is dated B.C. 37. Twenty years later he began to rebuild the temple magnificently. His reign was energetic but violent; to his wife and kinsfolk murderous. He rebuilt the town called the Tower of Straton and named the new city Cæsarea, in honor of Augustus Cæsar. It had a temple in Greek

fashion; but in his later years he cast off all pretence of Judaism, and brought in Roman customs. His death is computed to hav fallen in March, B.C. 4. It will be observed that, according to historians, the current reckoning of the Christian era is wrong by three years.*

CHAPTER V.

JEWISH SECTS AND JUDAS GAULANITIS.

THE prophet Isaiah looked forward with joy to the time, when, under the righteous rule of a king from the root of Jesse, Ephraim would not envy Judah and Judah would not vex Ephraim. The head of Ephraim was Samaria, and the head of Judah was Jerusalem. But alas! in five hundred years the enmity of these rivals did not come to an end. After the captivity of the ten tribes, miscellaneous Eastern colonists were planted in all the towns of Samaria, who never wholly accepted the religious law of Jerusalem. They ar mentioned in a contemptuous tone (2 Kings xvii. 32—41) as "fearing "Jehovah and serving graven images *unto this day*,"—probably full as late as Ezra. Even now no Samaritan can obtain a Jewess as his wife! They hav the Pentateuch in a character older than the square Chaldee type, and, it is believed, they do not accept any other writing as sacred. Circumcision did not suffice to unite them cordially with Jerusalem. Which was earlier to blame,

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* As we admit *no year of zero*, the common chronology supposes Jesus to hav been born in B.C. 1, and to hav been *one* year old in A.D. 1. From B.C. x to A.D. y is not $(x+y)$ years, but $(x+y-1)$.

is unknown; but Samaria ill-endured subjection to Maccabean rule: we may conjecture that sufficient local freedom was denied to her. This system of centralization made other towns disaffected. She is said to hav preferred a Syrian master. Josephus narrates that (perhaps about B.C. 120) while two brothers, the VIIIth and IXth called Antiochus, were in long contest for the throne of Syria, a Jewish High Priest called Hyrcanus took the opportunity of revenge against Samaria for being the ally of Syria against Jerusalem. After a year's siege he not only captured the city (Antiq. xiii. 10, 3), but by diverting mountain torrents against the walls swept away all appearance that it had been fortified. Hereby the Samaritans were made more and more hostile, though the weaker party. Their town being in the high road from Upper Galilee to Jerusalem, they had opportunity to insult, vex and sometimes to murder; a crime which was imputed. Later, on the sacred day of Jerusalem, when the Holy Place was accessible to the multitude, Samaritans tumultuously rushed in and defiled it by throwing in dead men's bones. For this offence all Samaritans were excluded from the temple, and the Jews sought to avoid all needless dealings with them. When, through insurgency against Rome, banditti abounded in the land whom it was hard to distinguish from patriots, new opportunities arose to Samaritans for outbursts of vengeance and spite. Thus against the Romans the real force of Pan-Judæa was never united.

Among the Jews at large three religious sects were at this time reckoned: Sadducees, Pharisees, and Essenes. The Sadducees adhered to the old law and refused to accept the imported doctrins of future life and retribution, heaven and hell, genii or demons enthroned in the air and reigning over special nations, angels personally united to individuals (the Roman or Etruscan idea of

each man's special genius? Compare Matthew xviii. 10), demons possessing men's bodies, and other tenets which the Jews of that day had imbibed. Against the doctrin of life renewed to an individual after death they were able to argu, that it had been in very early days the established dogma in Egypt; that Moses, being well educated in Egyptian lore, cannot hav been unacquainted with it; therefore his total omission of it in the Law is a virtual protest against it as false. If he had believed it, such suppression would hav been guilt and cannot be imputed to him. They refused all attempts to soften the asperities of his law; hereby were accounted very severe as judges. Moreover, they ar spoken of as existing chiefly among the richer, perhaps the haughtier, part of the community,—a sacerdotal caste, virtually royalist.

The Pharisees were far more numerous and far more popular. To them, apparently, belonged the majority of the Doctors of the Law or Rabbis. To the multitude the Sadducees did not appear devout; but the Pharisees much more commanded their veneration. These diligently cultivated moral science (no doubt with frequent over-subtlety) — and honored the maxims of deceased worthies, under the name of tradition. They largely adopted and systematized forein religious notions. Partly by tradition and partly by ingenious reasoning, they labored to adapt all the laws of the Pentateuch to the needs of the modern nation, and to soften down some of its very harsh punishments. We may conjecture from the apocryphal story in John viii., that they judged the punishments commanded by the law against female unchastity to be extreme and barbarous. Of course they could not avow this,—perhaps not even to themselves. A crooked ingenuity was their only practical resource, and such lawyer-like habit must somewhat pervert the

intellect. Nevertheless to this sect mainly were due such prosperity and goodness as prevailed in domestic life, and such just and mild administration as largely conduced to the public welfare.

The third sect, the Essenes, is far more peculiar. That any establishment of it existed at Jerusalem we ar not informed. There were many of them in Syria and in Egypt, as attested by Philo. Their number is estimated (in Judæa) at four hundred thousand. They were Jews, yet they had peculiarities as to ceremonial practices which forbad their admission to the altar in Jerusalem. They were like an Order in Christendom, with separate government and stringent laws; a Church within a Church. The basis of their Union was common property. For any one who wished to join them the first step was, to throw his private property into their general fund. From it each had his equal share of food and clothes, as brethren. There was no one centre for the Order, but special Establishments in many towns. Each member was at home in any of them, and partook of all things on a par with residents. Hence in travelling they needed no baggage, or wallet of provisions, no purse, no second coat, only *arms for defence against robbers*. Thus they were not absolute Quakers. Their costume was probably simple and uniform; it was of pure white like that of priests in Egypt, and many in Syria and Crete. Their food was equally simple. Virtue they placed in superiority to appetite and pleasure. On Marriage a majority of them looked down as a weakness; yet they zealously adopted the children of others. They eagerly studied ancient books concerning the Soul and the Body, Philosophy and Health. From Greek poets they imported a belief concerning the Isles of the Blessed, and other notions; from Plato or from the East, ideas concerning Spirit and Matter. Though scrupulously cleanly,

they yet avoided to oil the skin,—a process like our use of soap,—whether regarding it as luxurious, or because the oils in the market prevalently came from Syria, and were manufactured by idolaters.

The managers of their common property were elected by general vote; and in each establishment a special caretaker for strange members was appointed. Clothes and shoes they wore without change, until useless by time and rents. Among themselves they neither bought nor sold, but freely received and freely gave.

The routine of their work and meals as described in Josephus reminds one of a well-ordered Catholic friarhood or a community of American Shakers. At the common table they hav two meals in a day. Religion is everywhere prominent, and noble moral precepts ar inculcated. Silence, gravity and respect for Elders ar always maintained. They go to various work, under the despotic rule of a director, and hav no free action, save to bring Aid and Mercy to those who ar in need. Before entering the dinner-hall they bathe in cold water and dress in linen coverings, which after dinner they put off as sacred. At the beginning and end of the meal a priest says grace, and the whole company pays honor to God as the provider of food. Neither cries nor tumult pollute the house, but they concede alternate gentle talk. Anger they deal out justly, passion they restrain, good faith they uphold, to make peace they ar activ. Oaths among themselves ar superfluous and forbidden, but from candidates for admission they exact frightful oaths, with a probation lasting for three years. Each candidate swears to keep nothing from the community, and to suffer death rather than reveal its secrets. But these secrets must hav been quite harmless in ordinary times; for Peace, Truth, and Justice were the paramount principles of the Order, and, as it were its normal mottoes.

Yet such a community would seem to any Roman officer detestable, the moment he learned that it had oaths of secrecy; and after the insurrection of Judas, called the Galilean, he would think his horror and his hatred to be fully justified. A few words ar needed concerning this Judas, and we take up the tale from the death of Herod the Great.

War, says the earliest of philosophic historians, is a severe schoolmaster. The sufferings of the Jewish people, the hopelessness of revolt, the vehemence of Herod hushed for awhile the outbreaks of religious zeal: but on Herod's death new tumults arose. The dissensions among his children probably awakened in the discontented a hope that a time of redress was come: but the complexity of affairs is far too great here to detail. Archelaus, son of Herod, made promises which were perhaps interpreted as a sign of weakness. Strange movements followed, which frightened the Roman officers in the province; and, to inspire terror, *one* officer, Sabinus, is stated by Josephus to hav crucified about *two thousand* Jews as insurgents. (Bell. Jud. ii. 5, 8.) Their action being necessarily that of *guerilla*, the Romans treated them all as robbers. Yet we may hope that popular report or Roman policy exaggerated the number.

Archelaus, by the decision of Augustus Cæsar, succeeded to about half of his father's kingdom, with the title *ethnarch* (nativ magistrate); but after ten years of very unpopular rule, he was deposed by Augustus, and the whole of his territory *was absorbed in the Roman province of Syria.* Thus Judæa, Samaria and Galilee were placed for the first time *under direct Roman rule*, about A.D. 6 or 7, and Quirinius (or in Greek Cyrenius), governor of Syria, became also chief governor of the western half of Palestine. Augustus ordered the usual

Roman registration of income to be made with a view to taxation. Herod or his son Archelaus may in their irregular way hav fleeced the Jews as much in the past, as was to be feared in the future; but these Idumeans passed as nativ princes, being circumcised. The fact that a forein idolater was registering every field and farm-house with a view to tax it, brought home to the Galileans the completeness of their slavery as never before. Judas, of the city of Gamala, beyond Jordan, in the district of Gaulana, first stirred the hill people to resistance, in company with Sadok, a Pharisee. This Judas was an Essene, a religious devotee; Josephus calls him a *sophist*, that is, a student of science or wisdom. He not only roused his own sect, but spread revolt through the most thickly peopled part of Palestine, refusing to listen to the prudential counsels of the high priest at Jerusalem. His doctrin was mainly religious. The Jews, having God for their king, were base in enduring mortal lords; but he made also the political addition, that to submit to be registered for forein taxation was a first step to utter slavery. With brave men who were *not* zealots in religion, he was able to use the very effectiv argument—It is better to die, fighting for nativ law and liberty, than to be forced into the ranks of Rome, and sent abroad to die in fighting against the liberty of other brave nations. In Galilee his revolt was apparently most formidable, therefor he was popularly called Judas *of Galilee*. Galilee is inferior in acreage to that ultra-Jordan district,—the old land of Bashan, Ammon, and Moab, then called the *Perœa*, and included in Palestine; but Josephus says, Galilee was more populous. The soil remained soft in the driest summer, being watered by mountain streams. For fruit and for every kind of crop it was excellently suited. Petty towns or large villages abounded, the smallest

having a population of 5,000. Such a nativ mass of brave agriculturists made a Roman general tremble, if he heard the whisper of religious fanaticism. Though Judas belonged to the very peaceful and righteous sect of Essenes, yet, once launched into insurgency, he could not afford to reject brave and earnest allies from any quarter. Guerilla subject to a local captain ar ill-distinguishable anywhere from banditti and robbers; and when their fanaticism rose to the point of treating Jews who would not join them as partizans of the enemy,* they virtually became robbers and assassins, as the Romans describe them. It was a frightful struggle, but Roman resources gave to Rome the victory. The cruelty of her revenge may measure her losses and her alarm. The Roman commander thought to cut away future insurrection by crushing out the religion of the Essenes; with this object he insisted on their *blaspheming Moses* and *eating food forbidden by their ceremonial law.* Josephus summarizes their treatment in a few dreadful lines. After stating their great longevity,—many of them living above a hundred years,—and their astonishing contempt of pain and death, he adds the following:—

"The Romans racked and twisted, burnt and broke them, "and passed them through all instruments of torture, to "force them to blaspheme Moses, or eat some forbidden "food. They not only refused; but disdaining to coax "their tormentors, addressed them with irony, and "yielded up their lives cheerfully, as about soon to "recover them."

Augustus Cæsar would not have formally sanctioned any such violences against a national religion; but his subordinates well knew that he never punished provincial

* In the Anglo-American war of independence, the insurgents treated the "Tories" as spies and friends of England. But Lord Cornwallis pressed them into English ranks, and in so far exhibited them as marks for attack.

authorities even for enriching themselves unjustly; and that too great zeal in the public service was never resented. In short, while military weakness was a bar to promotion, high-handed cruelties in or after insurrection would be accepted as marking an energetic officer. But on the Jewish nation what must hav been the moral result? Who can blame them, if they more and more abhorred subjection to Rome? No doubt, they did hate *Roman* rule, as we should; perhaps they hated the sight of a Roman. Thereupon, Roman historians call them *haters of all mankind*, and believe themselves impartial and philosophic.

CHAPTER VI.

JOHN THE BAPTIST.

Concerning John the Baptist we learn not only from the books of the Christian Canon: we hav corroboration from the historian Josephus (Antt. xvii. 5, 1—2). No one has seen reason to doubt the substantial accuracy of all that will be here adduced concerning the career of this singular man.

Some hav plausibly maintained that he must hav belonged to the Essene sect; but whether rightly or wrongly, is of no importance whatever. He did *not* adopt the Essene costume, nor subject himself in any way to the authorities of that sect. His very partial clothing reminds one of an Egyptian monk. He had a gown of camel's hair and a girdle of leather; very insufficient in a winter of frost and snow: but as the description places him by the side of the river Jordan, probably in the plain of Jericho celebrated in antiquity

for its palm trees, at a depth of many hundred feet below the Mediterranean sea, raiment so scanty may well hav suited that climate. His food is stated to hav been locusts and wild honey. Locusts make their appearance only for a very short season, and in exceptional years: hence it has been plausibly suggested that the *fruit of the locust tree* has been confounded with the insects. If on such fruit and on wild honey he subsisted for some time, this may hav been set down as his sole and uniform food. The likeness of his exterior to that which was believed to hav been assumed by ancient Hebrew prophets, caused a great sensation even in Jerusalem itself; especially when the topic of his preaching became known, for his great announcement was, "*The "kingdom of God* (or of Heaven) *is at hand.*" Most acceptable was such a message to a people who for above eighty years had groaned under Roman despotism—a power which had inflicted countless miseries not only on insurgents, but also on the most peaceable and submissiv, in the unrelenting and cruel struggle of ambition. Moreover, if in very truth the kingdom of God were at hand, the prophet Malachi warned them that God would send to them Elijah the prophet before that great and terrible day. Would it not appear that this strange and mysterious John was (somehow) Elijah in disguise?

But that was not all. John was a fervent preacher of righteousness and a rebuker of sin, and taught that the great day of God would bring destruction not only on forein oppressors and idolaters, but also on all wicked members of the Jewish nation itself. Therefor he cried to all who were conscious of sin, "*Repent ye;* for the "kingdom of Heaven is at hand." In token of repentance he urged them to adopt a rite employed by the Pharisees and others in the admission of proselytes (that is, converts) to Jewish religion,—the rite of *baptism;* a

Greek word which means *plunging* (or being plunged) under water. In that latitude, especially in the climate of Jericho, a dip under water could seldom be very disagreeable, often the contrary. "To wash away filth "of the flesh," (as an Apostle entitles it,) betokened the renunciation of all that defiles the soul. Numbers of the Jews flocked to John, "and were baptized of him in "Jordan, confessing their sins."

The belief further went abroad, *perhaps* even in this early stage, that certain other words of high prophecy pointed at this John. He whom we call the later Isaiah, exhorting his countrymen to return to Jerusalem when permitted by Cyrus, imagins Jehovah himself journeying back to Jerusalem, and *a voice in the desert* commanding a royal high road to be constructed for his easy passage. The multitude who had no access to the entire roll of the prophet, and no ability to interpret poetical imagery, easily believed John to be meant by "the voice crying "in the wilderness," in preparation of the coming *kingdom of God.*

The three first books which we call gospels agree that a vast multitude from Jerusalem as well as from other parts flocked to John, to confess sin and to be baptized. All three represent him as uttering severe rebuke, and predicting that every tree which bore no good fruit would be cut down and cast into the fire. Luke represents him as entitling the mixed concourse "a brood of "adders." Matthew says, he uttered the phrase against certain Pharisees and Sadducees from Jerusalem, scornfully asking them, "Who hath warned you to flee from "the impending wrath (of God)?" On the whole, his preaching is broadly clear. A day of fiery wrath and judgment is close at hand. Repent ye, and your sins will be remitted: so alone can ye find admission into the coming kingdom of God.

John uttered no direct word, so far as we know, against Roman rule. He attacked the sins of his own people. Its priestly rulers had been stripped by the Romans of the royal name, of royal revenues, and all the highest initiativ, by putting over them on one side a Roman prefect, on another Idumean ethnarchs. They remembered painfully that the scandalous controversy between two Jewish princes had helped these foreiners into their galling supremacy. Undeniably the nation was suffering through the sin of its chiefs, their predecessors. They bowed the head, at least in secret, to John's sharp invectivs. Besides, as Roman taxation seized for itself all the main revenues, it is very probable that the High Priest and his Great Council were unable to maintain their own dignity without severe exaction from petty sources, called in contempt, *mint* and *cummin;* exaction which perhaps seemed mean to themselves, even while they knew not how to dispense with it. Their conscience was uneasy, and an idea pervaded even Jerusalem that John was a prophet sent by God to rebuke them.

Out of this arose a new question in many minds, and especially in those least able to study the prophets carefully and intelligently; namely, Is not Messiah to be manifested as the Divine agent of Vengeance in the approaching Great Day of wrath and restitution? Must not John be a forerunner of Messiah, if the kingdom of God is really nigh at hand?

In the belief of a somewhat later generation,—a belief which may hav been correct,—John himself distinctly replied to this question, by avowing: "After me cometh "one mightier than I, whose shoe-latchet I am not "worthy to unfasten. I indeed baptize you with water: "he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit;" words possibly alluding to the prophecy of diffused personal

inspiration in the promised sacred era. (Jeremiah xxxi. 33, 34.) The Herod of that generation was at first impressed with much reverence for John; but when Herod proceeded to dismiss his own wife, and seduce his brother's wife, John faithfully rebuked him. Herod in anger first imprisoned, and finally beheaded John. War against Herod followed from the father of the divorced wife. Herod was defeated; and Josephus tells us, that from the universal reverence felt for John, the defeat was ascribed to a judgment of God.

CHAPTER VII.

SOURCES OF THE ACCOUNT OF JESUS.

When John the Baptist vanishes from the page of Josephus, we ar cast upon the books called Gospels for information concerning the earthly life of Jesus. Justin Martyr, who wrote in defence of Christianity about A.D. 150,—hardly earlier,—is supposed to quote often from our Gospels, but seldom in exact words as we hav them. He does not name them as separate books, but calls them Memorials of the Apostles. Enormous study has been spent on the four books by modern theologians; and according to the positiv decision of those ostensibly best able to judge, the three first were compiled with *at least one common document* before all three writers' eyes. Luke had some additional documents. None of them can hav written as eye-and-ear witnesses. Some of the materials which they trusted *may* hav been penned in the earliest time. They *may* also hav been notes taken by hearers of the men called Evangelists, who orally recited to the first Gentile Churches the tales current

among Jewish Christians. In the opening of the third Gospel we ar informed that *many* had already undertaken the same task. Luke's four first verses ar in a widely different Greek style from all that follows, showing that the writer of the preface is compiling, not composing. Of course this is favorable to his honesty of purpose; as showing that, in transmitting the account, he does not needlessly change its forms of expression.

To accept marvellous tales on the word of writers who do not define their grounds of assurance, the date and names of their authorities, nor giv to their own contemporaries any means of examining,— belongs to inexperience. We see that no idea of the necessity of Criticism had presented itself to them. If we happened to know that their date was much earlier than that of Justin Martyr, it would not accredit their books; chiefly, because they evidently count upon extreme credulity in their readers and hereby display their own credulity. They expect us to receive religious miracles with immense results, if true,—and very pernicious, if untrue,—solely because an unknown writer tells us he has carefully compiled them; or even without his saying so much as that. They could not so write unless they were ignorant of the deceptivness of report and the mischiefs of credulity;—ignorant that all the baneful follies of false religion rise out of the too great readiness of mankind to believe in marvel. As to the current pretence that these writers ar divinely shielded from error, it is sufficient to reply that they themselves advance no such claim. It is made *for* them,—for the convenience of Christian assumption. Of course, if they made it, that would no more *in itself* prove anything, than if made by any of us moderns. It would need proof, if made; and would be liable to disproof. In fact the disproof is in the case before us easy and obvious. The pretence to

divine exemption from error is refuted by single clear instances; for God cannot be the author of falsehood. The frequent error of these writers in interpreting ancient prophecy is palpable. That it is impossible to reconcile the four Gospels has been discovered with dismay by many pious Christians, when they tried to interweave the four into a continuous narrativ. The demonstration has been set forth many times over. Space cannot here be allowed for an argument hard to exhaust. A few words on the first Gospel may be premised with the remark, that no Unitarian can (with the late Dr. Lant Carpenter) gain credit for the rest of the book by cutting away the two first chapters as unworthy of belief. All comes out of the same mint.

Matthew opens by an error in his genealogy. He has confounded Ahaziah with his great grandson Uzziah in the name of Ozias, and has omitted thereby three generations, and he counts fourteen where there ar seventeen or eighteen. He also confounds Jehoiakim with his son Jehoiachin or Jeconiah. Such blunders ar not made by the Spirit of God. He proceeds to narrate the miraculous conception on the strength of *a dream* which Joseph *is said to hav had* many years back; a miracle unheard of by the local public during the life of Jesus. This writer rests an event, on which he supposes the salvation of the world to depend, on evidence which *nowhere* would suffice to establish the most ordinary fact. In corroboration he misinterprets Isaiah's words, "A "maiden shall conceive," Isaiah vii. 14. But the prophet spoke of that which was to happen *immediately*. Before the child should be able to talk, the king of Assyria was to plunder Damascus. He evidently contemplated an ordinary birth, which apparently was fulfilled in his own son, Isaiah viii. 3. So easily is a miracle accepted and supposed to be confirmed!

Next follows a miraculous travelling star which conducts Persian Magi to the birthplace of Jesus; a tale which to no astronomer is plausible. A horrible cruelty is ascribed to Herod the Great, a public deed that must hav been notorious, and must hav been recorded by Josephus in narrating his great crimes;—the massacring of all infants under the age of two years, in and round Bethlehem. Here again he perverts prophecy to establish his apocryphal fact. Further, a journey of Joseph into Egypt is fabricated out of a ludicrous blunder. The prophet Hosea, alluding *historically* to the residence of the Israelites in Egypt, represents Jehovah as saying: "When Israel was a child, I loved him; and called my "son out of Egypt." Matthew misquotes it as a *prophecy* concerning *Jesus;* and from it invents for him a residence in Egypt during his infancy. Can there be any literary weakness greater, than to accept this writer as divinely guided?

Presently he givs us a calm narrativ of Satan carrying away Jesus to a pinnacle of the Temple, and again to the top of a high mountain whence all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, *could be seen;* an absurdity which confutes itself. Philosophical divines may interpret this as an "allegory;" but the writer accepted it and transmits it as fact. But again, he omits to tell us, whence came the knowledge of it; whether from Satan or from Jesus,—the only two who were cognizant of it.

A general remark must not be omitted concerning a superstition pervading the three first gospels, a superstition imported from heathenism surrounding them. Diseases well-known to us ar ascribed to indwelling demons. As if to prevent philosophic divines from explaining it away, the demons ar said to hav a preternatural acquaintance with Jesus as the Holy One of God.

In one signal case told by all three, a legion of such demons obtain leave from Jesus to enter the bodies of swine, when he expels them from the bodies of men. The exchange is effected. To argu against a story worthy only of the "Arabian Nights" is hardly worth while.

One who in the present light of geographical, physical and historical culture,—to say nothing of sound principles of literary interpretation,—can accept miracles in a past day on the mere word of *such* writers, otherwise unknown, may be pious and estimable, no doubt; but his judgment in the immediate question is not worth a rush. We need not go so far as the celebrated doctrin of David Hume, taken in its extremest form. It suffices to say that marvellous tales cannot be accredited by writers of whom we know nothing certain, except their credulity and their tendency to make history out of fancied prophecy.

There is no end of proof as to imaginary miracle. It is not amiss to speak of what oneself can testify. (1) When I returned from abroad in 1833, a lady eagerly inquired the details of my miraculous recovery from sickness. I did not understand her question. She explained: "I was told that in desperate fever you were "anointed with oil in the name of the Lord, and that "restored you to health." Most true (I replied) that I was thus anointed, but the fever got worse. After a sixth violent sweating it finally left me, unable to rise from the bed for a fortnight; and only after six months, by help of riding, I gradually regained my muscle. That there was any miracle, never occurred to me.—The lady was much disappointed. I believe she had trumpeted the cure.—(2) Another lady, a Mrs. Cummings, cousin to the late Lady Powerscourt, gave me the following account of herself. While Edward Irving, Hugh McNeil,

and other religious persons well-known in 1830-33 were full of debates about the Second Advent of Jesus, Lady Powerscourt's house was made a place of conference. Many assembled there, when (as happened) Mrs. Cummings was laid up in (supposed) pulmonary consumption. Edward Irving heard of it, and sent a message up to the lady's chamber, that he should like to pray over her, and hoped the prayer of faith might restore her. She sent down a flat refusal, begging him not to invade her privacy. Instead of obeying, he suddenly marched into her chamber, and began to pray aloud. She hid herself under the clothes, but presently by a stolen glance saw that he held both hands up to heaven while vociferating. Much relieved she was, when he, as abruptly, vanished; for *she had no belief* in his prayers. Yet, continuing her tale, "certain it seemed to others that every day after "his prayer I got a little better, until I rose from my "bed and was accounted well. Mr. Irving used to "reproach me with unbelief, that I did not recognize my "recovery as miraculous. I *never* had belief in the "efficacy of his prayer; I still do not know whether it "aided my recovery."—(3) While I write, placards in the shop windows of this town (Weston-super-Mare) profess to attest miraculous cures wrought by mere faith. To deny its power in *some* maladies seems unavailing.

That the original of Matthew xxiv. was first imagined during the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, is almost certain. Christian interpreters hav commented triumphantly on the close agreement of the prophecy with known history in verses 15—28; yet in the next verse, 29, it becomes manifestly and hopelessly false. For it predicts a convulsion of sun, moon, and stars, and *the appearance of the sign of* THE SON OF MAN *in heaven.* One might explain away sun, moon, and stars as oriental extravagance; but the Son of Man coming in the clouds was a

definit miracle long earnestly expected, and incapable of being misunderstood. The text asserts that this great event shall be seen *immediately* after the tribulation; and Jesus is made to add (v. 34), "This generation shall "not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." A prophecy of which the close is false, cannot be divine. If the earlier part is too close to actual history to hav been foreseen by human faculties, the whole must hav been composed after those historical events. (A like case was noticed in Daniel xi., xii.) Evidently then, Jesus *never uttered this prophecy at all;* but it was imagined for him during the terrible excitement of the war with Titus. The fact givs us a very definit warning as to the quality of these writings.

A few historical errors ar notorious, which may here be briefly indicated. Luke gravely mistakes the Roman census enforced by Cyrenius (Quirinius), both as to substance and as to time. Augustus (says he) ordered a census over the whole *inhabited world*—(wonderful extravagance of language); really over Syria and that part of Palestine which had been under Archelaus. This was not while Herod the Great was still alive, as Luke asserts; but when his son Archelaus was deposed by Augustus,—full ten years after Herod's death.—The same writer, in Acts v. 36, makes Gamaliel speak of the tumult of Theudas as preceding the insurrection of Judas Galilaeus; but the affair of Theudas was while Cuspius Fadus was prefect, in the reign of Claudius Cæsar. Gamaliel is made to speak *historically* of an event *then in the future.* Evidently his speech is an after-fiction. Such is the writer on whose word we ar to accept miracles!

Also, Jesus is made to speak historically of Zacharias, son of Barachias, as last of the martyrs; while in the actual history he was martyred thirty-seven years later, during the siege of Jerusalem by Titus.

Out of such documents no man can construct a tale claiming to be certain history—ascertained fact. The utmost that can be fairly asked or wisely undertaken, is, an account *possible and not improbable.* The three first Gospels, though full of tales that cannot reasonably be accepted as fact, and of facts that may justly be suspected as falsely colored, yet contain much beside which was hard to invent, and much which the writers would never hav willingly penned, had not a strong current of tradition floated it down to them as true. Such ar various small details which *prima facie* ar derogatory to Jesus.

Theodore Parker put forth the epigram, that it would take a Jesus to invent a Jesus: an epigram which has a measure of truth, but far less than he supposed. Every artist knows, that the more peculiar ar any man's features, the easier it is to caricature them. So, the more original a man's discourses and the more eccentric his conduct, the easier it is to interlard fictitious additions that shall be plausible. Given a first sketch of Jesus, and it needs no high genius to amplify and paint it up. Given an eccentric Jesus, time and oral tradition suffice for the genesis of a caricature, venerable to some, damaging with others. If any one can purge these narrativs of their dross, by all means let him do it, and that quickly: but to acknowledge that they ar full of false representations, yet to read them as sacred books, is "a mockery, "a delusion, and a snare."

Another topic here presses on us. The greater the value of the discourses of Jesus and the wider the authority they were to exercise, so much the more urgent was the need of a well-authenticated primitiv version. Nothing of the sort has been bequeathed by him. He has left us to guess how the narrativs were framed, preserved, compiled. Can he possibly hav

foreseen the prominence which they were about to receive, and the malignant consequences in the far future of leaving his doctrin as matter of controversy?

Concerning the fourth gospel we may briefly say: (1) that it starts by contradicting the other three on a cardinal point, in representing the Messiahship of Jesus as notorious to Andrew, brother of Simon, before they became disciples of Jesus; (2) that it replaces demoniac cures chiefly by two stupendous miracles performed in Jerusalem under the immediate cognizance of the rulers, who in vain strove to confute them. If the first three writers had ever heard of them, they *must* hav recorded them. If they never heard of them, the tales ar fraudulent inventions. (3) The Greek style of the fourth gospel credibly fixes it to be the work of John the Elder, from whom we hav three epistles. The doctrin in both is that of the second century, not of the first. (4) By substituting the magnificent address and prayer in John xiv.—xvii. for the agony in the garden, he betrays his object to be, *not* historical truth, but the glorification of Jesus. (5) The tale of Thomas, if true, could not hav been omitted by the others. This also must hav been a wilful conscious fiction.

A learned Unitarian* tells us that all difficulties of the fourth gospel "fall away at once, when we note that "this gospel is not and does not intend to be a source of "information concerning the historical Jesus, but is a "profession and testimony of faith put forward a century "after his death."—How easy to say, *does not intend to be!* Forsooth, the writer did not wish readers to believe what he writes solemnly and earnestly! It is only *a testimony of faith!* Is it then matter of indifference to faith, whether the things told ar true or false? I respect

* *Modern Review*, July, 1881, p. 849.

the three first writers. I believe that, according to their faculties and culture, they aimed to write and propagate truth. If the fourth is regardless of truth and knowingly propagates false facts, surely we ought to warn the simple that he is base and fraudulent, not use smooth phrases that make light of pernicious delusion.

CHAPTER VIII.

JESUS OF NAZARETH.

FIRST PART.

Scarcely was John thrown into prison, when a successor appeared who adopted John's own proclamation: "Repent "ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The recital of this formula is entitled: "preaching the Gospel "(or good news) of the Kingdom," and still more concisely, "preaching the word" (τὸν λόγον—Mark ii. 2.) The new preacher was a young man of Nazareth, by name *Joshua*, (in Greek *Jesus*) but he assumed as his mystic title, "The Son of Man." Ezekiel in vision believed himself addressed by the phrase, "Oh Son of "Man," equivalent to Son of Adam, or mortal man. The prophecy called Daniel's represents one "like to a "Son of Man" coming in the clouds of Heaven in God's great day to receive universal dominion. Based on this was another prophetical book, which pretended to be written by Enoch, the seventh from Adam, and was accepted so widely as to deceive Jude, author of a Canonical Epistle. In this book Messiah is called both Son of Man and Son of God. Thus the title of Son of

Man was advantageously ambiguous. It could not be attacked as an assumption: for it was ostensibly humble. But if any one interpreted it magnificently, Jesus (unless the narrators wonderfully belie him) had no objection at all to that.

The first matter here needing notice, is, the prevalent ascription to him of miraculous power in healing the sick, especially (according to the superstition of the age) in casting out demons. To disentangle truth out of a mass of untrustworthy legends is (as above remarked) a task, to which at best we can but approximate. The following attempt at an outline givs certainly a *possible* solution; many will say,--one that is quite *probable.*

Much excitement had gone abroad, especially in the rural districts, through the preaching of John, who not only announced the kingdom of God to be nigh at hand, but added that one greater than himself would follow. Who could that be but Messiah? When therefor Jesus came forth, uttering the same note of warning, but accompanied by tones of comfort to the captiv and the prisoner, to the poor and the oppressed, he was readily believed to be the greater prophet foretold by John, and at once drew to himself a wide and eager audience. Reasons hav been given for believing that beyond the limits of Judaism a great deliverer was expected, who would relieve men's bodily diseases. In Jewish dialect, Messiah was to destroy all the works of the Devil; and in Jewish belief, such diseases were eminently Satan's work. Jesus in consequence found himself expected to open blind eyes and restore crippled limbs. One and another, avowing *faith* in his ability, implored him to heal them. Parents or kinsfolk brought to him paralytic patients, or pressed him to come and chase away fevers or epilepsy, and other maladies ascribed to demons.

That Jesus on many occasions reluctantly undertook

to work cures, is attested distinctly by statements which must hav been transmitted to the writers as *fact;* for none who believed in his power would forge reluctance for him. Sometimes, after effecting a cure, he strictly forbad the patient to disclose it; an unintelligible and misanthropic charge, as commonly understood. It admits of one reasonable explanation. Though he had been successful in the particular case, he yet had no confidence in his ability to repeat the cure, if a new case were brought, apparently alike, yet perhaps less tractable. On several occasions he emphatically says: "*Thy faith* "hath saved thee," as if disowning power in himself. He shuns the crowd, who beseech him for miraculous cure. He is often represented as *marvelling* at their faith. He repelled a Syrophœnician woman rather harshly, until overpowered by her faith. Further, when pressed to show some *sign*, i.e., some *external* display of his credentials from heaven, he severely rebukes the request, calling those who made it "an evil and "adulterous generation." If his words ar correctly reported, they necessarily imply that he made no pretension to miracles.

These statements ar not compatible with the theory that Divine Pity and Sympathy dictated the miracles of healing. (Indeed it cannot reasonably be believed that the Most High who leaves mankind at large to struggle against diseases unaided, was led by *Pity* to giv miraculous cure to a definit number of Jews in that one age.) But their very opposition to the popular theory givs to the statements an augury of truth. Evasiv as they appear, no one believing his miraculous power would hav originated them. By a still more formal deputation somewhat later he was asked for his authority. That must hav meant his "authority to use the high and "imperious tone of a prophet." Now if he had worked

notorious miracles, he must hav appealed to them as his reply. Instead of this, he asks in turn: "What au- "thority had John the Baptist?" putting himself on a par, as regards authority, with one to whom no miracles were imputed.—Matt. xxi. 23.

In summary then, we may believe, that Jesus, when pressed by patients and their friends for miraculous cures, as was Vespasian some forty years later,* yielded to their pressure, very doubtfully and anxiously. After he had found that some were apparently benefited, he attributed the benefit to *their faith*, while he marvelled at it. He gradually became less able to resist similar entreaties, but still was diffident, and unless he found *faith* to pre-exist, made no attempt whatever at miraculous cure.—Matt. xiii. 58. Also, on some occasions, when he had seemed to be successful in private, he so well knew the uncertainties of such affairs, that he charged the patient not to reveal the cure. If such was the true outline of facts, we might confidently predict how the tale would be painted up. The accretion of vague reports would become ever greater with the lapse of time. Fifty years later, narrators were sure to exaggerate the number, the nature and the completeness of the cures. We may add, that with the more enlightened even of the Jews, the casting out of demons was regarded as medical, not miraculous, nor would the rumour of occasional success easily raise religious expectation in their minds.—So much may here suffice concerning Demoniacs and their cure.

The *order* of events is various in different Gospels, therefor seldom can be trusted. We cannot be sure when first Jesus surrounded himself with twelve permanent companions. It is agreed that he very early called two

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* See page 22.

brothers, Andrew and Simon, sons of Jonah, also two other brothers, John and James, sons of Zebedee. All were fishermen on the lake of Galilee. His previous celebrity as a preacher is implied in the fact, that at his call they abandoned their trade, and the second pair their father. Jesus himself had been a carpenter in Nazareth, a town of Galilee. If he had, merely as an aid to travel, taken some comrade, this would move no comment; but when he proceeded to augment his train of followers to *twelve*, which was the mythological number of the tribes of Israel, the case is altered. Afterwards we learn that when they asked what reward they should hav for abandoning their all, he promised that they should sit on twelve thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. It cannot be doubted that the number *twelve* was carefully planned in this aspect. It was a claim of supremacy on his part, such as no earlier prophet had made. The learned Christian historian Mosheim confidently interprets it as a silent claim of dominion over all Israel. Like the title "Son of Man," the procedure was eminently cautious. The deed implied much, but asserted nothing: it was enigmatic. It called on the multitude to interpret it themselves: it did not commit Jesus to anything. The twelve at once became *religious mendicants*, living on the pious for the honor of the Master; and if we believe our narrators, he threatened perdition to those who failed to giv them free entertainment. Matt. x. 15. See also x. 40.

Luke further ascribes to him the organization of *seventy* other disciples. The thought might occur, that they were a virtual bodyguard, too powerful for the feeble police of the Sanhedrin; a guard of whom the rulers were afraid. Mosheim thinks their number alluded to that of this sacred Council, and that this second appointment was also typical of dominion over Israel. But it is

equally possible, that the "seventy" ar a later fiction, which deceived Luke.

The twelve in Matthew and the seventy in Luke ar sent on a mission with orders moulded on Essene travel. "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor copper, in your "purses, nor wallet for your journey, nor two coats nor "shoes." Moreover he is said to hav endowed them with power over demons. (How little he trusted *his own* power in the matter, has been noticed.) When they tried and failed, he is made to ascribe their failure to the fact that that *sort* of demon needed *prayer* and FASTING as well as more *faith!* Yet his charge to them and his gift of power is represented as unhesitating and ample: "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, *raise the dead*, "cast out demons: *freely ye hav received;* freely giv." He either did not foresee that their lack of faith, lack of fasting or lack of prayer, would make his "free gift" useless; or else he never attempted at all to confer on them this wonderful and various power. The latter is the more respectful, as well as the obvious alternativ. The whole idea is a later fiction. From the apostolic epistles no hint of such a thing can be gathered. Indeed when the apostles ar supposed to be fullest of spiritual power, not one of them claims to raise the dead. Is it credible that they possessed it during the era of their imagined stupidity?

We can scarcely speak of any other Deeds of Jesus; we proceed therefor to his Words and Doctrin. As already said, following up John the Baptist, he announces the imminence of the Day of Wrath and God's Kingdom; but in one or two Parables (that is Comparisons) by which he chiefly taught, he introduced a strange deviation, which annuls the imminence of the day of wrath. In the Parable of the Tares, the "kingdom of heaven" seems to differ little from the evil rule which preceded

it. For the Supreme Master forbids his servants to root up plants sown by the enemy (Satan). A day *yet future* is to be waited for, when the tares will be burned. Similarly as to the bad fish mixed with the good. Thus the day of wrath, which with John was nigh at hand and gave power to the call, Repent ye! is suddenly deferred to an era indefinitly distant,—*if* the narrativ is correct. Nevertheless, again and again the coming of Judgment is called imminent. What moral wisdom or lesson not previously well known is conveyed in Matthew's parables, is far from clear.

It is not in the parables, pervaded as most of them ar by a belief in the impending overthrow of all human rule, that we find the most valued elements of the teaching ascribed to Jesus. From his preaching we may plausibly date the turn of the tide in the whole Western world against the sacrifice of beasts as a religious ordinance. To us moderns this element of ancient piety seems monstrous. Not only in Hebrew, Egyptian, Greek and Roman ceremonies does it abound, but also in all the notices brought before us of outlying barbarism, whether African, German, Scythian or Tartar. In several of the Hebrew prophets and psalmists this practice is treated scornfully. "Thinkest thou that I will eat the "flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?" is a question implying that the vulgar in Israel were not free from the Homeric idea that the savoury smell of burning flesh gave pleasure in heaven. [See too Gen. viii. 21, indeed Gen. iv. 4, 5.] Balaam, a Moabite prophet, in the lifetime of Moses, taught a new doctrin, as we learn from the Hebrew prophet Micah. If Micah vi. 5—8 is correct, Balaam earlier than any Hebrew taught the vanity of Pagan offerings, and that God requires of man only acts of Justice and Mercy, and a sentiment of Humility. In spite of Micah and Isaiah, ceremonialism

grew more intense, by reason of increased sacerdotal power in Jerusalem. In the time of Jesus, all sacrifice having long been confined to the Holy City, the rite itself could only be seen by a journey thither, especially at one of the great feasts. So short were the distances, that poverty seldom could forbid such pilgrimage. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that in our three Gospels no visit of Jesus himself to Jerusalem is mentioned until the last, and then he is a stranger whom the rulers found it difficult to identify. With all the modern facilities for travel, no entire rustic population is familiar with its local capital. Perhaps the peasants of Galilee and those beyond Jordan, and even the Samaritans, passed many years without seeing the sacrifices at Jerusalem. All local sanctuaries having been zealously suppressed ever since Samaria sank under Assyrian attack, the rural Israelites must hav grown up less accustomed to the religious slaughter of animals than ordinary Greeks or other heathens. It is not wonderful that a religious teacher who undervalued this practice and all the sacerdotal ceremonies found large sympathy among multitudes of rustic Galileans.

When we attempt to define the doctrin taught by Jesus, our first impression may be that he was consciously denouncing the Mosaic law and its whole system of ceremonies. But from this opinion we are held back by the effect of his teaching on his immediate disciples. If we advance the hypothesis that Jesus assailed the law itself, we clash with the undenied and undeniable fact, that the earliest Christian Church believed all the Mosaic ceremonies to be permanently binding;—with the fact also that Paul of Tarsus, while superseding these ordinances, never dares to assert that such was the teaching of Jesus himself. Had this been notorious, Paul could not hav remained ignorant of it, and must hav eagerly

availed himself of this corroboration. To say that Jesus could not speak as plainly as Paul, if he had wished to impress the same idea on his disciples, is simply ridiculous. No one as yet, of any school, has broached the theory that Jesus was guilty of conscious duplicity, and that he purposely undermined the system which was esteemed Mosaic, while pretending to revere and establish it. With our imperfect means of knowledge, a full certainty may be unattainable; but to the present writer the opinion most commends itself, that Jesus had *an instinct* of hatred to ceremonies *without being aware* that he was in collision with the sacred Mosaism. Believing that submission to the law was the duty of every good Jew, he inculcated absolute submission, and this, in entire good faith. We hav no reason to believe that he possessed any private manuscript of the law, or had any habit of studying it. In the synagogues the Sabbath readings were likely to be selected for general edification. The merciful and miraculous dealings of Jehovah with his chosen people and the general history would doubtless be prominent; so would moral instruction and devout utterances: but no motive prompted obtrusion of mere ceremonialism or dry legalities. In every synagogue, we may presume, a complete copy of our "Old Testament" was found; but it is highly improbable that such a roll was habitually and intimately studied by any but professed Doctors of the Law. How few Englishmen, in this day of cheap Bibles, hav an accurate knowledge of any part of the books esteemed sacred! In that comparativly illiterate age, when with cumbrous parchment and elaborate copying the price of a complete roll was necessarily high, no one can reasonably assume that a young Galilean carpenter had either the means or the disposition to study the actual law. It is therefor not possible only, but probable, that Jesus

in clashing rudely with the national teachers may not hav been aware that his assault was virtually against the law itself;—against "Moses," to use the current phrase. This theory will perhaps reconcile statements at first sight incongruous.

The direct, vehement, unmistakeable attack of Jesus on the legal sacrifices was not made until just the close of his career; but from the first the absence of everything *national to the Jews* is felt in his teaching. No allusion is made to the covenant of God with Abraham as of any present importance, nor of his covenant that a king from the line of David should rule over Israel, nor to the past history of the nation, nor to the promise of political supremacy over the heathen,—topics which abound in the Hebrew Psalms and in the later Isaiah. Nay, nor does he press the keeping of the Sabbath as the seal of the covenant between God and his chosen people, nor in any way regard religion as *a national affair*, as though the Church (or Sacerdotal System) were a Mediatrix through which the individual soul enters into relation with the Most High. Religion with him is *personal* and secret, not *corporate* and national. This is his greatest contrast to the prophets who went before him, and equally his greatest contrast to what is called the Catholic Christian Church.

The audience which Jesus systematically chose consisted of the less instructed and more rustic part of the community. He is stated to hav defined it as, "to the "*poor* the Gospel is preached." He does not care to teach any but those who will, like simple "children," look up to him. "Publicans and Sinners" ar imputed as his habitual audience. *Publicans* (Taxgatherers) denotes those who, by collecting taxes for the usurping power of Rome, violate the obvious prohibition of the law, and ar apt to drop all special care for Mosaism.

Sinners ar any who in general neglect Jewish scruples, *whether ceremonially or morally.* (There is absolutely no reason for supposing the word Sinners to mean females.) Both Publicans and Sinners were likely to be gratified by every attack made on the ceremonialism of Scribes and Pharisees by one who taught morals dogmatically and forcibly.

The first mention of a deputation from Jerusalem to the Galilean prophet is in Matthew xv. They enquire: "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the "elders? for they wash not their hands *when they eat* "*bread.*" These words do not bring to an English ear the sense intended; which undoubtedly was: "They "wash not their hands *before joining in a meal,*" which might involve dipping of fingers into a common dish. [See Matt. xxvi. 23, John xiii. 26.] Anyone who has seen an Arab company eating rice pilau, is aware how essential ar clean finger-tips for that very simple meal. A sacred law cannot go into all precepts of daily cleanliness, but wise teachers supply them. Elders among the Jews carefully inculcated *good manners* (as do Turkish teachers now) and *Tradition* gave weight to their precepts. They taught the grave *indecency* of putting unwashed fingers into a dish, whether of cooked grain or other food, on the common table. Knives or forks were not thought of, nor apparently even spoons: pieces of bread scooped up or sopped up even gravy. Fingers might really be already clean, but respect to the other guests required the visible act of washing; and then probably, as now, a jug of water was handed round with a basin for the purpose. This "tradition of the elders" did not counteract the law of God, nor did it tend to make social civility a substitute for obedience to that law. The precept was wise and blameless,—not at all superfluous; neglect of it seemed to imply coarse and unamiable

rusticity. The question, "Why was this precept of "good manners neglected?" was (to say the least) natural. Ar we then really to believe what Matthew tells us? According to him, Jesus does not deny, explain, confess, or apologize, nor yet does he justify his disciples; but as if gravely offended and irritated that anyone should step in between him and them, he makes no answer to the question, but merely *recriminates* in words which Christians forbid me to call rude and fierce. "Why do *ye also* transgress the commandment "of God by your tradition? *Ye hypocrites*," &c.

Was this the reply of one "apt to teach, meek, patient" according to Paul's ideal? Did it tend to show to those whom he thus assailed his moral superiority? How strangely he wastes an opportunity of instructing his questioners, if they in any way misjudged the conduct of his disciples! How gratuitously he raises a barrier against their reception of the superior knowledge which he claims! Nay, and is not sweetness of temper and gentle kindliness far better than mere knowledge?—But this is not all. Jesus flings at his questioners the charge of Hypocrisy, based on an argument which severely wounds himself, unless the Evangelists slander him. For the sin which he imputes is that of violating the fifth commandment, in that the Elders had defined certain ecclesiastical purposes for which money might be given by a son, even when *prima facie* a parent might seem to hav a better claim to it. We hav not before us the Pharisaic doctrin, therefor cannot defend it: possibly if we knew the details, we might condemn it. But this would neither justify dirty fingers dipped into a common dish, nor shelter Jesus from his own imputation of "making void the commandment of God," by neglecting filial duty to parents. When two sons were aiding their father in his work of fishing, they abandoned him at the

call of Jesus, and ar praised by him for obedience. Matthew and Luke say, he forbade a disciple to follow his father to the grave, and added the heartless precept, "Let the dead bury their dead." All is summed up in his extravagant avowal, "Unless a man hate his father, "he cannot be my disciple." However much we pare this down by urging "Oriental hyperbole," it cannot mean *less*, than that service to a parent must always yield to the personal claims of Jesus. Therefor if Matthew in ch. xv. correctly narrates his bitter recrimination, it virtually asserts: "For *my* service it is quite right to "neglect a parent,—even permanently to abandon him; "but if for the service of *God*, as taught in Mosaism, even "some partial diminution be made of support which a "parent may claim, the deed is unlawful and wicked: "nay, those who justify it ar HYPOCRITES precondemned "by the prophet Isaiah." Ar we really to accept such doctrin?

Matthew further tells us, that on this occasion Jesus uttered his aphorism, "Nothing that goeth into the "mouth defileth a man,"—a doctrin which utterly overthrows the Mosaic distinction of clean and unclean meats. His disciples told him that the Pharisees were offended at this revolutionary utterance. Well they might be: for it laid the axe to the root of the ceremonial law. They had a right to ask: "Does this teacher seriously "bid us to renounce our national lawgiver? If so, let "him state plainly that he is a prophet higher than "Moses, and is sent from God with loftier credentials. "Let him deal openly with us and expound his mission "and his grounds for claiming authority so high." But according to Matthew, Jesus does not frankly state his own claims, nor say a word to relieve the natural and reasonable offence of the Pharisees, nor did he effectivly instruct his disciples that the ceremonies ar of no religious

value. All Jews, in every part of Palestine, nay, whithersoever carried in the Dispersion, distinguished clean and unclean meats. Jesus, if he spoke as here represented, not only opposed his entire nation, but must hav known that he was flatly condemning THE LAW; and the disciples must hav discerned it. Either our Gospels here exaggerate his actual words, or he *privately* retracted and softened them. He *may* hav meant only that men ar *worse* defiled by what comes out of the mouth than by forbidden food;—very unwise as it is to join a dogmatic tone to forms of speech which mislead the simple: but such interpretation of his words is mere guesswork. And side by side with utterances that seem to contradict the sacred law, he is represented as venting vague, uninstructive, arrogant scorn of the national teachers, saying: "Let them alone; they ar blind leaders of the blind, and "both will fall together into the ditch." And what led him on to this scornful attack? According to Matthew, a simple inquiry why his disciples dipt into a common dish with fingers possibly dirty.

Certain modern Christians, anxious to exhibit Jesus as a type of immaculate morals, accuse these Gospels of virtually slandering him. Much reason, no doubt, there is for distrust of them. They uniformly daub the Pharisees with cruel imputations; but if we drop the coloring and examin the facts as detailed, the worst they hav to tell us, is, that the Pharisees, *like modern Christians*, believed the Mosaic system to hav divine sanction. If Messiah came, these Jews did not deny that he might be greater than Moses: but whoever claimed to be this higher prophet, must giv them some intelligible *proof* of his right to overrule their sacred law. What less could any man of good sense demand? The actual conduct ascribed to the Pharisees and Chief Priests by these bitter assailants is respectful, prudent, moderate,

forbearing under great provocation; while that which they ascribe to Jesus calls for widely different epithets. How much to disbelieve of the narrativ is a very uncertain problem; but any *general* distrust throws mist over the moral character of the events, and justifies the Mussulman contempt of the Christian books as corrupt. Moreover, in that case, what is it but actual guilt to read them solemnly in public worship as books especially sacred?

It was above remarked, that in the phrase *Sinners*, (joined to Publicans) the common idea that Sinners meant *females* is groundless. With regard to a certain woman of ill repute in one Simon's house,* it may be worth while to note that Luke's account is apparently a garbled remaking of Matthew and Mark's tale of what happened before the last supper: *that* was in the house of Simon the leper. The anonymous woman of the two first Evangelists has no aspersion cast on her. Luke tries to outdo the other tale by making the woman a notorious sinner, whose sin is forgiven *because* she has a personal love for Jesus; who is made to assert this in the least edifying style, at the same time reproaching his host Simon for not *kissing him*, and so on. Luke has tried to improve the story and has spoiled it. John has identified the woman told of in Matthew with Mary of *Bethany*. So careless ar Christian readers, that they infer *Luke's* woman to be Mary of *Magdala*, thereby blasting the good *Magdalen's* reputation down to this day. Putting aside this untrustworthy tale, there is absolutely no ground for supposing that Jesus ever had among his attached hearers so much as one woman of ill-repute.—There is another apocryphal tale in John viii. where Jesus *evades* the duty of a prophet higher than Moses,—that is, the duty

* Luke vii. 37, 38.

to confirm Moses, if Moses was right, or to correct Moses, if Moses was too severe; but this in no respect puts him into the relation of teacher to the guilty woman.

It would be quite superfluous here to make the patronizing remark that in the discourses attributed to Jesus "a great deal is good." Thoughtful and very able men who professed no allegiance to him, hav spoken their mind. Ram Mohun Roy translated "the Precepts "of Jesus" for his countrymen. John Stuart Mill in his latest writings caused surprize by his panegyric. If honor were claimed for Jesus as for Socrates, for Seneca, for Hillel, for Epictetus, we might apologize for his weak points as incident either to his era and country or to human nature itself; weakness to be forgiven and forgotten. But the unremitting assumption of superhuman wisdom, not only made for him by the moderns, but breathing through every utterance attributed to him, changes the whole scene, and ought to change our treatment of it. Unless his prodigious claim of Divine Superiority is made good in fact, it betrays an arrogance difficult to excuse, eminently mischievous and eminently ignominious.

It is hard to point to anything in the teaching of Jesus, at once *new* to Hebrew and Greek sages, and likewise in general estimate *true*. Forgivness of injuries, kindness to enemies, life after death, future retribution, had all been taught in Greece or in Egypt long ago. The pure attributes of God, his oversight of human conduct, his forgivness of penitent sinners, his love of righteousness, his judgments on the obstinately wicked, had been amply enforced by Hebrew prophets and psalmists. Voluntary poverty, equality of all disciples, had been vigorously exemplified among the Essenes; nay, perhaps long before in Pythagorean and Indian schools. One may search in vain through the Gospels

for a precept or sentiment so novel and valuable, as to justify the grandiloquent boast: "*Blessed ar ye* who "hear now from me things which many prophets and "kings *hav in vain longed to hear*."

It is asserted by some, that Jesus was *first* to teach a universal religion, which made no distinction of nation from nation, but embraced all as equals and brethren in the sight of God, with no local or ceremonial rite to divide them. Undoubtedly, as above observed, he had an instinct of hatred to ceremonialism, and at least once leans towards Universalism in slashing at the national teachers. When a Roman centurion (Matt. viii. 5—12) avows belief in his healing powers, he marvels at the man's faith, and takes opportunity to declare that many a Gentile shall *sit down* in the [banquet? or throne?] of the kingdom of heaven, when Jews ar shut out. But no general statement of Gentile equality is recorded of him. His address to the Canaanite (or Syrophœnician) woman leans to the other side; and it is certain that his own disciples never understood him to account Gentile and Jew equals in the "kingdom of heaven." To say that he was the *first* to teach a religion in which moral sentiment is paramount over ceremonies, is very unjust to his predecessors,—to Jewish proselyters contemporary with him; to many a Hebrew psalm, and utterances of Hebrew prophets: nay, we may ask, How much of ceremonialism is taught in the "Ode to Jupiter," of Cleanthes the Stoic? No speech of Jesus recorded for us approaches the sublime largeness of the true Isaiah in his prophecy concerning Egypt the idolatrous and Assyria the dangerous and bitter foe of Israel, "In that day "shall Israel be a third with Egypt and with Assyria; "of whom the Lord of Hosts shall say, Blessed be Egypt "my people and Assyria the work of my hands, and "Israel mine inheritance."

One piece of originality,—and that, highly important,—may indeed be claimed as a logical deduction from the tone and attitude of Jesus, or from the implied assumption in his teaching. Whether he himself intended and discerned it, is not clear.

All ancient nations, Gentile or Hebrew, accounted it a rightful function of the civil power to dictate religion to the community. The deep-thinking Aristotle agreed herein with received Mosaic doctrin. Among barbarians religious ideas ar only skin-deep. If their Chief adopts a new religion, the whole tribe easily follow him: but when time has consolidated institutions, the public religion, with all its barbarian error, is, as it were, burnt in and consecrated. Then the head of the State runs risk of deposition, if he be bold to innovate. If a citizen dare to decline a ceremony commanded by the nativ law, it is a high offence against the State. When indeed an Imperial power claims of the conquered a renunciation of their *hereditary* religion, this was in most cases judged to be tyranny, and has been resisted to death by Indian martyrs, as well as by Jews. But Antiquity certainly had not learned, that private men had any *right to a conscience* of their own in religion. The main reason was this: Religion in their idea was essentially external and corporate, not individual, personal, internal, as Jesus in every utterance assumes it to be. He never dilates on the covenant of Jehovah with *collectiv Israel*, but dwells on the relation of each separate worshipper to a Father in Heaven as a private affair. This was the fruitful germ, this was the "seed of mustard" by which he virtually called his countrymen to Free Thinking concerning their national institutions.

His preaching was dictatorial, but his example eminently encouraged Private Judgment. He did not parade his opposition to "Moses," and if we could trust

Matthew, he declared that every jot and tittle of the law is sacred. But in that same sermon "On the Mount," "Moses" himself is attacked, Matt. v. 38. "Ye hav "heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a "tooth for a tooth, but *I* say unto you," &c.—Now to whom does he here refer? Knowingly or unknowingly, to Deut. xix. 21. "Thine eye shall not pity, but life "shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth," &c. With the early prophets he agrees in not being dependent on Mosaism; but he differs from them herein: They conceal their own dogmatism by the formula, "Thus saith Jehovah," he reveals his dogmatism by "*I* say "unto you"—the Ego being paramount, and sometimes prefaced by *Surely, surely*, Αμὴν, Αμὴν. Few will doubt Matthew's word, that in Jesus this vehemence of self-assertion most struck the multitude, in contrast to the reverential modesty of their usual teachers. He persistently disparages and keenly assails the religious authorities of his own nation. He shows lofty contempt of the ancients in vague terms which do not exclude Moses; which certainly invite all to criticize ancient doctrin. He never appeals to the learned and cultivated intellect, but to the poor, as though "babes and sucklings" were the best judges. When in one matter Moses is quoted, he calmly sets aside that paramount authority, by the assertion that *this was an imperfect law, given to the people for the hardness of their hearts.* If that were true in one case, it might be true in twenty more: then what becomes of Mosaic authority? Scruples about the Sabbath,—that touchstone of a faithful Jew—he several times treats from a point of lofty independence. Once, if we can believe Mark (ii. 28) he claims as "Son of man" to be Lord of the Sabbath, *because* the Sabbath was made for man! Luke (vi. 5) omits this clause; and perhaps thought the logical conclusion required was: "Therefor

"*Man* is Lord of the Sabbath." Either utterance must to reverent and anxious doctors hav seemed profane in the extreme, who might comment as follows. "When "Moses commanded a man to be stoned to death for "picking sticks in the wilderness, did *he* look on the "sacredness of the sabbath with the same eyes as does "this Jesus? We *know* that God spake by Moses: but "as for this man, we cannot learn what is his authority "so to dogmatize."—Whenever the law is quoted, the virtual treatment of it by Jesus is suggested by the words, "Wherefor judge ye not of yourselves what is "right?" If in one breath (as in Matt. xxiii. 3) he bid to obey the religious teachers, in the next he teaches by his invectiv to despise them.

Such daring defiance of superior authority was in Jesus spontaneous and self-initiated. On the part of his disciples resistance shortly became inevitable, and, as time went on, was normal to the whole Church. Thus grew up the greatest moral novelty universal to Christendom,—separation of the two ideas, Church and State. Hence also the axiom cardinal to Protestantism: *Religion is not corporate, but is an inward allegiance of the individual to the Supreme Power of the Universe.*

Moreover, by emphatically declaring that of his disciples no one shall hav authority over another, nor be called Father or Rabbi, Jesus cast scorn on all Sacerdotalism. In no point has his teaching been more grossly reversed by historical Christianity. Even Toleration for those who ar satisfied to remain *outside* of the Church had to be fought out by weapons of war against Popes, Bishops, Presbyters and Cæsars, though it cannot be reasonably denied that in calling heathens to cast off the religion of their birth, Christian apostles did but imitate their Lord in judging the conscience and religious heart to belong to God, not to Cæsar. Undoubtedly Imperialists hav

everywhere felt, that in men devoted to the precepts ascribed to Jesus they hav but a lame and partial allegiance. "Dissidents" ar the foul fly that corrupts the sacred ointment of royalty.

Into politics Jesus appears seldom to venture. The virtue cardinal to his moral system, the virtue without which no disciple can be *perfect*, is that fundamental one of the Essenes, the renunciation of private property. This pervades his discourses from end to end. Not many Christians in any age hav obeyed him, and the prevalent excuse is, that he intended this precept for *the twelve apostles only*. But the Sermon on the Mount cannot be reasonably so confined, and therein he enjoins: "Giv to him that asketh of thee, and from him who "would borrow of thee, turn not away." The precept has no limitation. He who *asks* may be idle, may be a worthless beggar or a drinker; no special case is suggested as ground for just refusal. That industry is a human duty, cannot be gathered from his doctrin: how could it, when he kept twelve religious mendicants around him? No one who obeys him will long be able to keep property. Indeed in Luke the passage parallel to one given by Matthew as on the Mount, is: "*Sell that ye* "*hav*, and *give alms:* provide yourselves bags that wax "not old, a treasure in the heavens that fadeth not;" &c. Almsgiving is prominent with him, as a sort of sanctification.

Many precepts of the law had a sanitary purpose, and the Pharisees, like Egyptian priests, were studious of cleanliness. Jesus, deriding them for it, says (Luke xi.31) "Giv alms of your substance, and all things ar clean "unto you." It is not mere compassion for the destitute that is enforced; much rather is wealth treated as unsaintly,—an unrighteous thing, that will lessen our COMPENSATION in heaven. This is forcibly brought out

in the Parable of Dives and Lazarus; but without pressing that parable into the argument, we find in Luke that Jesus says: "Woe unto you that ar rich, for *ye hav* "*received your consolation.*" Nay, he brands wealth with the title, "the mammon of unrighteousness." In a Parable which is the despair of those who teach simple folk, he insists, that, as by a clever *wrong* a certain steward won friends, so each rich man by a clever use of *wrongful* possessions ought to buy friends who will receive him into everlasting habitations. Good news for medieval barons, enriched by rapine! By shovelling away wealth, they may buy treasures in heaven. Unless our narrators belie him, Jesus never warns hearers that to giv without a heart of charity does *not* prepare a soul for heaven nor "earn salvation;" and that selfish pre-speculation turns virtue into despicable marketing. To forgiv that we may be forgiven, to avoid judging lest we be judged, to do good that we may buy extrinsic reward, to affect humility that we may be promoted, to lose life that we may gain it with advantage, ar precepts not needing a lofty prophet. But to return to the topic of wealth, the remarkable tale of a rich young man, narrated with close agreement in three Gospels, is quite decisiv. He asks: "What shall I do (besides keeping the command-"ments of the second table) that I may inherit eternal "life?" Jesus replies: "Thou lackest one thing. If "thou wilt be *perfect*, sell all that thou hast and dis-"tribute to the poor, and thou shalt hav treasure in "heaven." This corroborates his aphorism, that no one can be his disciple, who does not forsake all that he hath. Thus it is *not* on the twelve apostles *only* that he lays this charge, but upon all who will buy *the Pearl of Great Price*, all who desire to win heaven as the paramount object, whatever the sacrifice. He does not say, "*Rather* "lose all your possessions *than* be false to your religious

"convictions," but "fling away your wealth, in order to "earn heavenly remuneration for your sacrifice:" a very different doctrin indeed.

Some other tenets deserve notice. The doctrin of Life after Death is often named as eminently due to his teaching. In the theory of Paul (2 Tim. i. 10)—who had no historical knowledge of Jesus,—"Christ abolished "Death and brought Life and Immortality to light." Yet Paul must hav known that human immortality was a doctrin of the Pharisees, imported from abroad before Jesus was born. At most he could but *establish* it. But how? The Sadducees (we ar told) plied him with an objection: thereupon he not only swept it away, but elicited immortality out of Jehovah's words to Moses, "I am the God of Abraham, &c. *God is not the God of* "*the dead, but of the living.*" With good reason the multitude "were *astonished* at his doctrin." Hitherto, the words had been interpreted: "I am *he*, who, when "Abraham was alive, *was* God to Abraham." They must hav been thus accepted by Isaiah and Jeremiah, who understood Hebrew well. If the Supreme Ruler condescended to speak in the Hebrew language to Moses, he was sure to speak intelligibly to all the great spiritual minds of the Hebrew nation. Sadducees were not likely to be convinced by the new interpretation. Even Luke found something deficient; for, to complete the argument, he makes Jesus add: "for all (*or*, for they all) liv (or ar "alive) unto him." Unfortunately this *reason* assumes the very thing to be proved. Besides, the argument avails only to those who believe that Moses duly reported the very words of Jehovah. Moses, who did not knowingly teach immortality, is made the Mediator through whom immortality is to be learned! Undoubtedly Jesus, like the Pharisees and Essenes, always *presumes* an after-life for man. This is all that can justly be said.

A Hebrew doctrin, false and mischievous, dominated in early days, ascribing to the anger of God against *sin* calamity of whatever kind, whether defeat in war, failure of crops, or bodily disease:—a folly which mars many of the Hebrew psalms. As to some on whom the tower of Siloam fell, Jesus (in Luke) opposed this error; but he startles one by entirely adopting it, when he identifies the two phrases, *Thy sins be forgiven thee*, and *Be thou healed of thy malady.* — But perhaps these words ar foolishly imputed, in the wish to glorify him. Nevertheless, if we accept the narrativs as *substantially* correct concerning his *doctrin*, there is much indeed to regret, much reason to wonder that thoughtful persons can approve. His vehement and frequent threat of a hell with unquenchable flames and undying worm, has above all things given vitality to this noxious doctrin, which darkens the character of God and hardens the hearts of men. From none of the other Christian writings could the dreadful idea of Eternal Sin, Eternal Despair and Eternal Agony be established. Therefor we must believe that it was a dominating idea characteristic of *him*,—as indeed, after him, of Mohammed. He threatens this doom to the simple townsfolk to whose conscience his message of "The Kingdom" did not commend itself:—a worse doom at the day of judgment than that of Sodom and Gomorrha. A preacher so dogmatic and so full of threat ought above all to be cautious in expression. With his enigmatic and hyperbolical style and precepts paradoxically framed, (such as, "Hate your father and mother for "my sake,") he must hav puzzled and *revolted* many hearers. A teacher with ordinary wisdom who expected docility and submission from simple folk, would know how dangerous ar hyperbolical and vague precepts. The writer whom we call Matthew gravely assures us that Jesus *purposely* made his teaching obscure, in order

to fulfil prophecy; *lest* the people be converted and he should heal them ! ! (Matt. xiii. 11—17.) How grave the danger of ambiguous precept, is disagreeably shown in his panegyric on those who hav made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. To this day it is debated whether he spoke figurativly or literally. For the latter an Origen could plead that the zeal which adopts the cruel letter may carry the gospel into Eastern harems from which a mere celibate Paul is excluded. Whether here also the fault is thrown on the stupidity of reporters, I wait to learn.

In his teaching is a still more fundamental unsoundness. He repels by rudeness or evasion the more educated inquirers who may approach him; and then solemnly thanks God that "He had hidden *these things*" (*i.e.* the divine mission of Jesus? or his divine wisdom?) "from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto "babes. *Even so*, Father! *for so it seemed good in thy* "*sight.*" Was he unaware that *Reasons* ar necessary to convince *the wise and prudent?* He demanded that his hearers should become babes, thus *identifying Credulity with Faith.* This rottenness at the core has been fatal to Christianity. Truth, even if nobly established at first, cannot maintain itself, if Credulity is consecrated as a virtue; but Fantasy overcrusts and smothers it, because Criticism is frowned down.

SECOND PART.

A TIME arrived, which, according to our three narrators, was critical to Jesus. Rumours favorable to him had thickened among the populace. He inquired of his apostles, what was the prevalent opinion. They replied: "Some think thee to be John the Baptist, others one of

"the old prophets, or Elijah" (brought back from heaven). "But whom think *ye* that I am?" is his further question: to which Simon replied, "The Messiah of God." According to Matthew, Jesus hereon burst into the joyful utterance: "Blessed art thou, Simon son of "Jonah! for *flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee*, "*but my Father which is in heaven.*" He proceeds to bestow on him the title Kefa (ROCK)—which we render by Peter or Cephas—and adds: "On this Rock will I "build my Church"—whether on Simon or Simon's confession is hotly debated:—"and the gates of *Hades* "shall not prevail against it." Mark and Luke ar here more concise: but all three agree that after accepting Simon's avowal, Jesus strictly charged them to tell no man of it. Only one reasonable explanation here offers itself; for such a dialogue will not be ascribed to wanton fancy. Jesus, while despising the doctors and daring to denounce them, had (like them) great difficulty in defining how Messiah was to be discerned. Though inwardly believing himself to be the pre-destined One, he had never dared to utter the claim. If he even had a complete copy of the old prophets, to reconcile them was so hard, that doubt was perhaps inevitable. Naturally he wished *others* to enunciate his Messiahship; hence his eager delight and exultation when Simon made the bold avowal. Nevertheless, after a short interval, old doubts recurred, with painful misgivings. He was frightened at his own elation; therefor he forbad them to tell any one.

But the word, as an arrow, stuck deep in his side. From this era he began to ponder on an ambitious career, which must lead either to glorious triumph or to violent and ignominious death. He is consistently said to hav tried *from this moment* to prepare his disciples for the worst, often warning them of the fate in store for him.

Here an interesting question arises, Hav we any clue that may suggest what was *his own* conception of the task and function of Messiah? If we may assume, that he discarded the idea of a warlike Messiah such as the prophet Micah suggested,—such a deliverer to Israel as Judas Maccabæus had been,—did he imagine Messiah to be prefigured by the "servant of God" in the later Isaiah, from which alone the idea of Messiah suffering death for his people could be gathered? In answer, a remark must be premised. It is not credible that Jesus should not hav discerned what were the expectations of his disciples, and should not hav corrected them, if he judged them to be wrong. Therefor, whatever error on this topic they all held down to his death, must hav been his error also. Several passages giv us information. In Luke xxii. 29, we read: "I appoint unto you a *kingdom;* as my Father "hath appointed unto me, that ye may *eat and drink* at "my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging "the twelve tribes of Israel." We should call a teacher mad, who used such words to simple men, and did not expect them to understand him literally. The royal table, and the chief ministers eating and drinking at it; the judicial thrones, and the same favored ministers dealing out awards to the inferior multitude,—precisely hit off the idea cardinal in those days to a heavenly monarchy planted on earth. As, in a Greek republic, to be dieted in the City Hall at public expense was the highest honor, so in a royalty to liv at the king's table. The *eating and drinking* distinctly marks that continued *life in the flesh* was intended. Bread and Wine were the normal food, as with king Melchisedek; and so a little above, Luke xxii. 18, Jesus says: "I will drink no "more of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God "is come." Moreover Acts i. 6 converges to the same result. The disciples there ask Jesus: "Lord! wilt

"thou at this time *restore the kingdom to Israel?*" words on which it is useless to foist any spiritual sense. He does not reprove them for the belief, that the kingdom (now held by Rome) is to be restored to Israel, nor does he deny that he is himself God's champion to restore it; but simply avows that the *time* of the event is a secret with God, thus virtually asserting that earthly dominion is to be restored to Israel:—as indeed every Jew who accepted Isaiah was bound to believe. Of course it may be objected that this discourse was fictitious, being held after the death of Jesus; but it does not the less attest the sharply defined persistent tradition that *at that era* the disciples continued to believe such to be Messiah's function, though Messiah had first to suffer.

An indirect confirmation meets us in Zachariah's hymn, Luke i. 68. We cannot know when first it was penned; but Luke's authority (some earlier Christian) received it as *an inspired prophecy*. "Zachariah was filled with the "Holy Ghost and prophesied." We must infer that Zachariah uttered what the early Christian Church accepted as sound doctrin. Twice he distinctly intimates the great function of Messiah to be, deliverance of Israel from a heathen yoke; "that we should be saved from "our enemies and from the hand of all that hate us"—v. 71; again, v. 74, "that we, being delivered out of "the hand of our enemies might serve him without "fear," &c. Deliverance from the power of the heathen was *the first condition requisit* for the pure and permanent service of God; *therefor* is here put forward as the main result to be achieved by the new-born Messiah. It is called Redemption.—Such being the Christian belief when this hymn was first incorporated with Christian sacred writings, the belief must hav subsisted all along, first among those devout Jews who were precursors of Christianity; next, in the first Christian Church. It

cannot hav been a secret to Jesus, neither can it hav been reproved by him. At the same time it is every way probable that on so obscure a matter as the career of Messiah the mind of Jesus varied from day to day. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah may well hav weighed on him and given him the augury that Messiah would suffer death for his nation (as indeed may happen in war to a victorious general); hence his dark forebodings which astonished his disciples, and made them incredulous. Their very incredulity implies that he said absolutely nothing to unteach the universal belief that the great function of Messiah was to raise Israel to be the head of the Heathen, as abundantly attested concerning "God's "servant" in the later Isaiah.

One more broad historical fact ought to be considered in this connexion, *viz.*, that in the final war of the Jews under Hadrian, their leader Bar Coceb was accepted as Messiah; so persistent was the national belief that to deliver Israel from the oppressiv foreigner was Messiah's task. That it was the prevalent conviction in the time of Jesus is thus doubly confirmed; and of this he cannot hav been ignorant. Not to oppose it, was to acquiesce in it. If he had opposed it, such opposition *must* in some way hav been transmitted to us in his teaching.

The strong probability therefor is this. Jesus himself not merely knew that his nation in general and his disciples in particular expected Messiah to break the yoke of Rome and establish Israel in supremacy, but by his *occasional* distinct utterances he encouraged them in it; though at other moments when his fears prevailed over his hopes, he foreboded violent treatment, perhaps death, for himself. The stupidity imputed to them would be a natural result of his vacillation. While he lived, they could not believe that Messiah, instead of saving Israel from the proud and violent heathen, would

himself be slain. But after his death, they wondered that they had not accepted his own plain words, which more than once had warned them that he was rushing voluntarily on destruction.

To that issue at length he hastened. He accepted a triumphal entrance into Jerusalem previously planned by himself according to the three first narrators. For he sent forward to provide a suitable ass, that he might fulfil the prophecy of Zechariah (ix. 9) and *represent himself as King of Jerusalem.* The words ar: "Behold, "thy king cometh to thee riding on an ass, and on a "colt* the foal of an ass." A crowd escorted him, a very great multitude, and spread their garments on the road before him, in acknowledgment of royalty. Others cut branches from the trees to hold as triumphant laurels amid shouts to him as Son of David. Knowingly or unknowingly, he hereby put himself into the power of those whom he regarded as his bitter enemies. They had now only to whisper to the Roman Prefect (Pontius Pilatus) "Do you intend to let this man pass himself off "to the multitude as King and Son of David? *Judas of "Galilee never went so far in daring.*"

Jesus had come up to Jerusalem by a very circuitous route, passing through Jericho.† If it be true that a very great multitude escorted him triumphantly into the Holy City, his escort may hav consisted largely of men from along the Jordan, baptized by John and ready to accept Jesus as Messiah. Since in the three gospels it is definitly stated that he of himself planned the triumphal

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* Matthew is here supremely ridiculous. Misled by Hebrew parallelism, he thinks *two* animals ar intended; makes the disciples bring *two*, put their garments on *them* and seat Jesus upon *them*. Our translators, new and old, to disguise the absurdity, adopt the word *thereon* which hides the plural number of the Greek.

† Compare Matthew xix. 1, xx. 29, with Luke xviii. 35, xix. 1.

entry, it is not rash to infer that he had taken previous measures for its success by announcing his pretensions as he passed. For in Jerusalem itself, where his personality was scarcely known, he could not expect enthusiastic reception.

But after this royal parade, according to our three narrators, he forthwith displayed to the Holy City the presence of its paramount lord by an astonishing demonstration *against the Mosaic Law*. He proceeded to the courts of the temple, armed with a lash; drove out the money-changers, overturned their counters and the seats of those who sold doves; alledging that they made *his* Father's House a den of thieves. The traders seem to hav made no resistance, whether smitten by the report that the prophet of Nazareth was the anointed Son of David, or panic-struck by violence so unexpected. Mark adds, that he would not suffer any man to carry any vessel [or basket?] through the temple, that is, through the courts. To understand this proceeding, we ought to know accurately what routine of sacrifice then went on. If we judged by the Pentateuch and the books of Kings and Chronicles, he found in the temple-courts altars and huge fires, dishes and blood pans, sacrificial knives, bellowing and shrieks, with all the filth of butchery, odour of blood and of roast flesh, and banqueting of guests, while new victims were slaughtered; all gravely incongruous (as we judge) to cleanliness, decorum and sacred devotion. But none of these greater nuisances ar mentioned. Clearly he assumed authority (possibly unawares) to override the law, softened and improved into comparativ decency as it may hav been by the diligence of the prudent Pharisaic interpreters. Cattle-merchants, money-changers and dove-sellers were necessary for obedience to the law (Deut. xiv.) which, in order to centralize sacerdotalism and gather the tithe of all clean

beasts and birds, as well as of crops, prescribed that the offerer and his household should partake of these first-lings in the sacred precinct. Moreover, anticipating the difficulty of driving cattle from a distance, the law itself suggested the carrying of money to buy oxen and sheep at the temple, and eating them "before the Lord." Hitherto the Sanhedrin had believed this routine to be required by the service of God. Did Jesus now intend to denounce the law of Moses? Did he claim, as Messiah, to overrule and supersede it, or what did his strange conduct mean? Unless he really were the long expected and much desired deliverer of Israel, he must be a very audacious and dangerous man.

Nevertheless they persevered in the quiet and dignified behaviour always previously ascribed to them. Children in the temple-courts, delighted with the novel turmoil, raised afresh the shout: "Hosannah to the Son of David," a dangerous war-cry to every Roman ear. The chief priests took the opportunity of mildly asking Jesus, "whether he heard" what the children were crying out. Promptly, and as it may seem, joyfully, he replied that he did hear and warmly approved; thereby attesting to them his personal complicity in the royal Messianic acclaim. Hereupon they withdrew for further consultation, and he went out to Bethany.

Next day, on his return to the city, the chief priests and elders put to him the formal question, "By what "authority had he been acting?" words which might refer solely to his violent dealing in the temple-courts, or also to his acceptance of the royal entry. This time he was not so frank, but evasively asked in turn, "What authority had John the Baptist?" On their confessing ignorance, he haughtily replied: "Then "neither do I tell you *my* authority." Not content with this scornful refusal to justify or explain conduct *utterly*

unlike that of John the Baptist, he went on (if we may trust the narrativ) into new and gratuitous insult: saying to the chief priests and elders: "The tax-gatherers and "harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." Next; in his favorit way he told them a parable, by which he suggested much, and committed himself to nothing. Matthew tells us that they understood him well. "There were certain wicked husbandmen" (said he) "who, when the landlord's bailiffs came to receive "his rent, beat one, stoned or killed another, and finally "planned to kill the lord's own son." By the son of (Israel's) lord he meant himself. Thus, while evading responsibility for so grave a charge, he is made to impute to the chief priests a plot to murder him. Nevertheless, they ar said still to hav repressed natural indignation at his conduct.

Unless Matthew's narrativ is violently and disgracefully incorrect, we cannot be far wrong in imagining the secret conference which followed. No certainty is here pretended as to the belief then held by Caiaphas and Gamaliel concerning miraculous aid to be expected by God's chosen people; but our modern experience makes it highly probable, that they, like to ourselves, combined a firm belief that God had worked miracles for them in the past, with scarcely the faintest hope of miraculous aid in the present. The High Priests must hav known that the victories of Judas Maccabæus had no element of miracle. Every High Priest compared the resources of Rome and those of little Judæa in the prudential spirit of a statesman. He might not despair that the advent of Messiah might bring back miraculous agency; yet, after the bitter experience of the power and cruelty of Romans, caution and extreme timidity were prevalent in the policy of the Sanhedrin. With this assumption, we may imagin their conference as follows. The aged

Annas may hav opened by the ominous words: "If this "man persist in his claim to be the Anointed One, Son "of David and King of Israel, he will bring on us a "new Roman war, to which we ar quite unequal." Such foreboding may hav called out an opposit sentiment from some more hopeful elder, some Joseph of Arimathea: "True! most true! yet surely our wise elder must re- "member, that if we ar *ever* to be delivered, as our "prophets assure us, from the crushing yoke of our "enemies, it will be as when Judas Maccabæus was sent "from God. We shall hav war against foes far superior "to us: yet these Gentiles will learn that the Lord of "Hosts fights for Israel. Is it certain that this Jesus, "unwarlike hitherto, may not after all be the Messiah "who will breathe preternatural force into our people?" "Nay!" might the High Priest Caiaphas answer: "see "how he shuffled when we asked for his authority. He "overrules the law of Moses, yet does not plainly avow "himself greater than Moses; nor did he dare to repeat "that the babes and sucklings were right in hailing him "as the predestined Son of David. One who is to rouse "the armies of the Lord into enthusiasm must proclaim "himself God's elect and anointed; not skulk behind "parables and evasions." To such remark the wise Gamaliel was likely to assent, and to add: "We must "further put him to proof, and try of what metal he is "made. Let us ask whether he holds the doctrin of "our gallant, but alas! unsuccessful champion, Judas "Galilæus, concerning tribute and allegiance to a foreign "idolater. The reply is sure to give us insight into his "Messianic tone." This proposal was approved, as we know from our Gospels.

Of all difficulties pressing on a scrupulous Jew, most painful was the conviction that divine books forbad his recognition of an idolatrous and foreign prince. The

words of the law (Deut. xvii. 11) were too distinct to explain away. These had in recent memory kindled a direful war, entraining Roman cruelties most horrible. The embers were still hot, and ready to flame anew. The popular sentiment against taxgatherers testifies that the Jewish conscience held their trade to be illegal. Of this grave difficulty some solution might be hoped, from one who presented himself as a heaven-sent, pre-eminent teacher, greater indeed than Moses, and now as the Royal successor of David. But when the question was propounded to Jesus very respectfully in the name of the chief religious authorities,—(if we ar to believe Matthew)—he replied in his own chosen dialect: "Ye "Hypocrites! why put ye me to the proof?". As if it were not their obvious duty to put him to proof, and a thing to be rejoiced in by a prophet equal to the occasion. How were they to obey his precept, "Beware of false "prophets!" if they did *not* put to proof the wisdom of one who claimed to be a prophet? *If we believe the tale*, Jesus proceeded to pronounce, that a coin is Cæsar's property, and must be handed to Cæsar as tribute, when demanded, if it bear Cæsar's image! Whether the new school of Christian advocates here condemn Matthew's narrativ as foolish, false and damaging, it will be interesting to learn. Meanwhile, it is reasonable to ponder, how, if Matthew be substantially correct, the chief priests must hav been affected by the reply of Jesus.

When a Frenchman, by giving an equivalent, has possessed himslf of an English sovereign, does he account the coin to be Queen Victoria's property, or admit that he is justly tributary to her? When the Queen or her ministers parted with the coin, they did not lend it, but sold it. The same was true of every coin stamped with Cæsar's head. Under the Roman republic every sound foreign coin was freely accepted as tribute. If it can be

shown that Augustus or Tiberius Cæsar were more exacting, and refused all money unless it bore their stamp, it could not prove their right, but only their overwhelming power. The production of what is here called "the Tribute Money" was wholly *irrelevant* to the moral and religious question asked; and to call for a specimen of the coin, was merely a theatrical effort to throw dust into the eyes. No solution is thus to be had of the question proposed. If Jesus really thus replied, we may be confident of the effect produced on the chief priests. They would say among themselves: "This man "is an impostor, as well as impudent, slanderous and "reckless of the law of Moses. *He takes no notice at all* "*of the law.* He has no tenderness for our pious brethren, "who ar in agony from our perplexing subjection. He "assumes arrogant tones of superior wisdom; yet, when "interrogated on a pressing difficulty, he displays puerile "*un*wisdom: and because we (as is our duty) test him "by a very respectful and reasonable question, he insults "us as *hypocrites.* Truly we ar wrong in being respect- "ful to so ill-bred a churl. What further proof need we, "that such a man, pretending to be a divine messenger, "is really an impostor, or half mad? Into what mis- "chiefs may he not plunge us with Rome!" Will it be said, that Jesus did not foresee such a result of his reply? or that, foreseeing the result, he deliberately intended it?

The rulers, having thus felt their ground, saw distinctly at what they must aim, —*to exculpate themselves from any complicity* with Jesus in his claim to be the predestined Son of David and antagonist of Roman power. They believed that his Messianic pretensions could only involve the nation in defeat and misery. So galling was the Roman incubus, that a calamitous explosion might follow from the mere words of a weak pretender. Attack

with a whip, as on the money-changers, while he claimed to be Messiah, might precipitate insurrection as fatally as a spear. Therefor their great anxiety was, to convince the Roman prefect and Cæsar himself, that they vehemently disapproved the claim of Jesus, and desired the stoppage of his career.*

After this, we cannot doubt that they attended carefully to his movements and his public speeches; and *if it be true* (as Matthew and Mark tell) that at this very crisis he uttered the speech given us in Matt. xxiii., the whole Sanhedrin must hav been immediately informed of it. An American lawyer has entitled this speech the most virulent invectiv known to us in history. We cannot imagin it to hav been taken down by a shorthand writer, and it may hav received exaggerating touches; but unless it had been very bitter, very fierce, no admiring disciple could hav produced such a memento of it. As we now read it, its sole purpose was, its sole result can hav been, to exasperate the rulers into the conviction that he was an implacable, untractable fanatic, whose career it was absolutely necessary to arrest. In its close the speaker seems aware that he has failed of keeping his hearers in sympathy with him. The students of sacred law whom he assailed so contemptuously were held in high esteem by the multitude in Jerusalem, in whom most probably his invectiv did but move indignation. He must hav felt that his words fell flat and dead upon them, when he closed with the dark threat, that *they should see him no more* until they were eager to receive him as blessed and coming in the name of the Lord.

Pious Christians hav accepted the defamatory epithets,

* Mr. Charles Hennell is the earliest English writer known to me who insisted that *political fears* were the main influence in the death of Jesus.

Hypocrites, Blind, Fools, Avaricious, Tyrannical, Children of Hell, as calm truth, stigmatizing pre-eminent wickedness of those Mosaic rulers: yet some of his utterances seem (if correctly reported to us) to convict themselves of bitter slander: they outdo Tacitus and Suetonius in malignity. The Hebrew doctrin of religion *may* in the origin hav been not much better than that of Greece or Rome; but certain it is, that with intellectual growth those Gentiles evolved by their most esteemed sages only a God who with high mind and power had no moral sympathy with man, and gave no aid to human virtue; while the Hebrew teachers, one and all, rose into the belief of a God "righteous and loving righteous-"ness," "holy and claiming holiness" from man. When Tacitus raves against Gentiles converted to Judaism, we disregard his words as folly. In special cases converts ar not morally improved by their change; but to a vast majority the effort of private judgment in religion and the sacrifices made for conscience' sake entrain a visible improvement: much more when made out of a Paganism full of impure and silly fables into the Hebraism of that day. Yet Jesus is made to denounce Woe! on the Pharisees for their zeal in proselyting, and to declare, "Ye make your proselytes two-fold more the CHILDREN "OF HELL than yourselves." Tacitus had no vocabulary spiteful enough for this. Again: (if we accept the narrativ) Jesus rudely insults them, calling them Hypocrites, for building tombs of deceased prophets and deploring the outrages of their ancestors against them. Yet what better could they do, than grieve for the past and honour their martyrs? and what indication of HYPOCRISY did it giv? what proof had he to alledge of so gross an imputation?

Two or three days passed, during which Jesus clung to the precincts of Jerusalem. From Matthew we

learn that it was resolved now to bring him before Pilate the Roman prefect. He finally ate the Paschal Supper with his disciples in a secret upper room, yet migrated from it to the Mount of Olives and thence to a certain oliveyard (Geth Semane) when night came on. A strange scene is then revealed, which none of the narrators was likely to invent. From agitation of mind Jesus could not sleep, but woke his companions and chided them for not staying awake with him. He prayed earnestly against having to drink a certain cup;—no doubt he meant, Roman punishment for his Royal entry. When some proposed to defend him with the sword, he replied (according to Matthew) that by praying to his Father he could obtain twelve legions of angels. Such hope then had buoyed him up; and though his agitation showed that his confidence in miraculous aid was shaken, he still clung to the fond idea. If in his agony his sweat was like great drops of blood, (as Luke says), it denoted a terrible fall from high hope; but an immovable calm,—or shall we say? the apathy of exhaustion,—succeeded.

Though Jesus had been seen in Jerusalem many times in the few last days, the priests did not know his sleeping place, nor trust the power of constables to identify him in the night: and they had chosen night for his arrest. They therefor paid money to Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, who conducted the constables to Geth Semane and indicated him by a kiss of honor. No angel guard defended him. The apostles found no mark of Messianic power and divine aid. Their faith naturally broke down, and they took to flight. He was led before the High Priest, who asked whether he had professed to be able to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days: but Jesus refused to answer. Next, when asked whether he claimed to be Messiah and Son of God, he assented

vehemently, in a tone triumphant, perhaps threatening. This the High Priest is said to hav called *blasphemy:* whether he did, or did not, is historically unimportant; for there was no legal issue. The further proceeding against Jesus turned *solely* on his assumption of an *earthly* royalty, which might draw after it a war with Rome.

Next morning, when Pilate took his seat in the judgment hall, complaint was made against Jesus of insurrectionary entry and royal pretensions. To all military tumult Pilate was bound to giv attention: to neglect the present accusation was impossible. Yet inasmuch as no armed force had been embattled by Jesus, Pilate could not believe that any serious insurrection was planned. He probably regarded the outcry about a son of David and king of Jerusalem as child's play and Jewish nonsense, so long as neither sword nor spear was forthcoming. On the other hand there was something formidable in the temperament of this eccentric people. Even in Jerusalem a strange prophet no sooner rides on a white ass, with a procession to call out Hosannah! (the war-cry, it is said, of a former insurrection) than a great multitude is ready to acknowledge him as king. If such a thing be possible by the side of the High Priest and Great Council, what may not happen if this man return to the warlike and more excitable population of Galilee, with the name of king, and with the report that he has been received as king in Jerusalem? One with whom in Jerusalem this was mere vanity, may be carried even against his intention into real insurrection, when urged on and elated by thousands of brave fanatics, who bitterly remember Roman cruelties.

Pilate condemned Jesus against his own convictions, through fear of being thought at Rome feeble against insurrection. That the offence for which Jesus was crucified (as were many hundreds of Jewish insurgents)

was purely political, is proved by Pilate's inscription over him (Matt. xxvii. 37) "Jesus, king of the Jews." It is also notable that Pilate crucified *two robbers* with him. This can hardly hav been a gratuitous insult, while Pilate had no hostile animus against him. All insurgents were called "robbers" by the Romans: hence the obvious presumption is, that Pilate was making a demonstration to Cæsar of his zeal and activity in suppressing insurrection. This idea is corroborated by the conduct ascribed to the robbers. They said to Jesus, "If "thou be the Messiah, save thyself *and us*." This would be quite natural, if from patriotism they had taken up arms in the belief of his royal pretensions; and equally natural then was it for Pilate to punish them side by side with the king in whose name they had risen against Cæsar. Provisionally therefor this interpretation of the robbers' position is reasonable. Pilate would hav saved Jesus, if he could hav extorted any distinct renunciation of *earthly* royalty. Tiberius Cæsar would no more hav been troubled by any claim of *heavenly* grandeur, than by a Stoic's boast that he was a king, and the mass of mankind slaves. But Jesus, *after professing to be a king*, refused further utterance, and remained (as a Roman officer would call it) contumaciously silent; thus depriving Pilate of all excuse available at Rome, where the memory of Judas Galilæus might be his ruin. Nevertheless, even at the last, it seems, he tried to save the life of Jesus; for he took him from the cross prematurely and delivered him to his friends.

The two first Gospels ascribe to Jesus while on the cross the shriek of despair: "My God! why hast thou "forsaken me?" No one would invent this cry to glorify him; therefor it looks like truth. It implies that he had, up to the last, clung to the belief that

legions of angels would carry him victoriously through the career into which he had plunged, and that, when struck down from lofty imaginations, a total collapse of mind ensued. The third and fourth narrators suppress his cry of despair, apparently as unworthy of him. Luke ascribes to him a nobler utterance: "Father! for-"giv them; for they know not what they do." But Luke is here quite untrustworthy: for he represents one of the "robbers" who was crucified with him as reproving the other, and making actual *prayer* to Jesus as Lord of Paradise, which is magnificently accepted. So marked a contrast of the two robbers could not hav been unknown to Matthew and Mark, who distinctly declare that both of them insulted him. The fourth narrator makes him die with the grand utterance: "It is finished;" certainly a great improvement. But how much is here historically true, will be judged differently by different minds.

That the priests could not easily identify Jesus denotes that he was very new in Jerusalem. Archbishop Whately (late of Dublin) teaches, that Judas expected his Lord to summon angels to his rescue, as soon as an arrest was attempted; and hanged himself in despair, when no such event followed. But how much to believe concerning Judas* is a hard problem, when we discern that our narrators hav made history out of misunderstood prophecy. Their "potter's field" is a blunder. The true sense of the Hebrew is probably given by the LXX., as the *foundry* or *mint;* and no sound exposition can connect the prophecy with the proceeding of Judas.

The inquiry may justly be made, whether Jesus, after accepting and applauding Simon's avowal that he was the Messiah, at all changed his ideas concerning the coming Kingdom of Heaven. That he ever for a moment

* Paul in 1 Corinth. xv., says that Jesus after his resurrection "was seen "by the *twelve*."

internally aspired to be a new Judas Maccabæus, no one is likely to assert. Perhaps an obscure utterance attributed to him bears on this question. I submit my interpretation with diffidence; for I hav to assume that the Greek given us in Matt. xi. 12 does not *to the letter* express his exact argument. I suppose him to hav meant to say: "There ar persons who wrongfully expect "the kingdom of heaven to be established by weapons of "war. Such men as was Judas of Gaulana *use violence*, "and think *to seize it by force:* and *even* after the "preaching of John the Baptist, who declared that it "must come *through national repentance of sin*, the error "continues to this day." That from the very beginning of his career Jesus believed himself higher than any preceding prophet and about to announce higher wisdom than any taught in the Mosaic law, cannot be doubted without a total rejection of our Gospels; but it may be asked, did his idea of the "kingdom of heaven" at all change, after he braced his courage to claim and act the part of Messiah? Apparently there *was* a change. The order of events in Luke is so untrustworthy, that we cannot press as belonging to the second stage his phrase *(found in Luke only*, xvii. 21), "the kingdom of heaven "*is within you.*" But in his many comparisons of this kingdom, which seem to belong to his earlier stage, its predicted triumphs ar by moral and spiritual growth. The comparison of its process to that of leaven, and to the growth of mustard, also the parable of the sower, ar in this respect very notable. "The Son of Man" in Matt. xiii. 41 may be adduced on the other side; yet in what appears to be his earlier teaching, there is nothing flatly political like the twelve thrones of Matt. xix. 28, set up over the twelve tribes for compensation of the twelve disciples. Indeed when the mother of John and James (in Matt. xxii. 20—24) comes to entreat

ascendancy in his royalty for her two sons and hereby excites jealousy in the ten, Jesus warns them that these high posts must be earned by suffering and by service; yet drops no rebuke on this political ambition as a fundamental mistake. In his triumphal entry he assumes to be King of Israel, and again before Pilate avows himself to be a king, and allows Pilate to interpret the word as every Roman was sure to understand it. These ar indications that with the growth of his own ambition, his idea of "the kingdom" became more that of human royalty,—divinely established, no longer demoniacally. Indeed immediately after avowing himself to be Messiah, he claims (Matt. xvi. 27) to be the Heavenly Son of Man predicted in Dan. vii. 13. If that be rejected as spurious because the phrase "take up *his cross*" is anachronistic, yet no just suspicion rests on Matt. xxv. 31—46,—a discourse very characteristic of him, nor on his declaration (xxvi. 64) in reply to the solemn demand of the High Priest. Had he not explicitly claimed to be prefigured in Daniel's vision, it is unintelligible that this should immediately on his death become the cardinal doctrin on which thenceforth his Church was to rest. The duty of *watching* for the coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven does not appear in his earlier stage, and *possibly* is spurious in the later stage,—an afterthought.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VIII.

It will not be overlooked that in many texts Jesus is represented as avowing that the Pentateuch has Moses for its author, and rests on divine authority. Christians hav in general accepted this as decisiv and final.

Nevertheless modern skill in literature has pursued

its diligent course. The life-labors of many scholars, eminently of Germans, hav established that the Pentateuch is the work of *at least* three different writers, who wrote at different times,—the last as late as King Josiah. English clergymen, no doubt, struggle to deny this. The learned Professor, Rev. George Rawlinson of Oxford, is a very uncompromising opponent of Bishop Colenso, who has set forth his own argument elaborately on the German lines; and Mr. Rawlinson in answering him (*Aids to Faith*, p. 251) distinctly admits (1) that Moses made up the book of Genesis from a number of records of more or less antiquity; (2) that the Pentateuch underwent authoritativ revision [a thousand years after Moses] by Ezra, who modernized it and introduced many parenthetic comments; (3) that the last chapter of Deuteronomy is not from Moses.—Ezra's dealing is merely conjectural, his authority so to deal is a fiction: but the admissions here made confess that the book is COMPOSIT and was worked up at a very late age; while no particle of historical evidence is produced in proof that Moses wrote *one line* in it.

The able German Professor Hupfeldt, commenting on the Sources of Genesis, avows that the discovery of the composit origin of the Pentateuch is as certain as it is important; that no retrograding of opinion is possible, as long as criticism exists; that we now start on this basis as already proved: proof is no longer needed, but at most, improvement in detail. Colenso equally, with unanswerable force, contrasting the versions of the Fourth Commandment in Exodus and in Deuteronomy, infers that the later writer knowingly alters the earlier, and supposed himself at liberty to do so, *i. e.*, regarded the composition not divine, but human. The pretence that the law was *recovered* under Josiah, was adverted to above, p. 3.

Unless we reject the testimony of these Gospels con-

cerning the utterances of Jesus, we hav to believe *either* that he was misinformed on this literary question and was wrongfully dogmatic; *else*, that he knew the truth and concealed it. The latter is a most improbable imputation. To ascribe to him the knowledge which for us has been worked out by the co-operation of hundreds of students aided by libraries, is as unreasonable as to ascribe to him a knowledge of physical astronomy. On those who accept the Gospels as true, the conclusion presses that Jesus thought himself eminently wise in matters on which he had everything to learn. Therefor, when he assumed to be the Hebrew Messiah, there is no cause to wonder that he deceived himself and fell very deeply.

CHAPTER IX.

FIRST STAGE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

Dismay and Despair ar described as the first emotions in the disciples deprived of their Master; which were gradually dissipated, when the opinion gained currency, that the *soul* of Jesus, on leaving the body, had ascended to heaven, and *was there glorified.* That this was the original meaning of the doctrin, that "God raised him "from the dead" is attested by Peter's first Epistle, which says: "Christ was put to death in *flesh*, but was "made alive in *spirit;*" words that show the writer to hav no belief that the flesh of Jesus was called back into life. Indeed in Charles Knight's Cyclopædia the doctrin of Resurrection held by the *Pharisees* is described as consisting *not* in the re-animation of the *body*, but in the passage of the *soul* into some other body. We might

therefor make sure that this was the current doctrin with those Jews. The same result may be confidently inferred concerning the belief of Paul (1 Cor. xv. 38, 44), who soon became the great apostle of the Gentiles. On so fundamental a topic neither apostle could differ from the collectiv church. No tale concerning the *flesh* of Jesus being made alive after death is found in any book which can be proved to hav existed in the life-time of those apostles. We know that the disciples accepted doctrin from what were called *visions;* which, being either simply dreams, or results of *abnormal* sleep, can bring no evidence as to exterior truth, certainly no proof of fact. The Church settled down into a belief that the *spirit* of Jesus had appeared to many, but (according to one tale in Luke) so *transformed* that he was not recognized by the outward likeness. When we further consider what is assumed by his ascending into heaven *in their sight*, with flesh and bones (as an Anglican article expresses it), *viz.*, that in the plumb-line vertical to the *Mount of Olives*, there is *a local heaven aloft*, into which his body soared, we ar warned as to the credulity of that age; yet, as in the "assumption" of Elijah and Romulus, we hav no reason to believe the tale to hav been current among actual contemporaries. "Pardon is given to "ANTIQUITY," says the historian Livy, "to mingle things "divine with human, and thus make the origin of cities" [or of religions?] "more august."

With what ease absurd stories were circulated concerning events of an earlier generation is instructivly shown in Matt. xxvii. 50—53. No sooner has Jesus uttered his despairing cry, than (we ar told) the earth quakes, rocks ar rent, the graves open; "and many *bodies* of the saints "which slept arose, and *came out of the graves* after his "resurrection, and went into the holy city and appeared "unto many." So vague and impossible a statement

passed as fact fifty or seventy years later. Bodies coming out of the graves! By whom could they be recognized? [But only after his resurrection! We need not comment on this, though the words ar in the Sinaitic version; but they ar absent in some other, according to Titschendorf's note.] Criticism is superfluous.

Comparing our Gospels, we can see indications how stories *hav grown in telling.* Matthew, after saying that the disciples met Jesus on a mountain of Galilee after his death on the cross, honestly adds, that *some doubted.* He says nothing about the body of Jesus passing through closed doors. But in the twelve apocryphal verses added to Mark it is stated that Jesus appeared to the eleven as they sat at meat. Luke adds, they supposed it was a spirit, but Jesus showed them his hands and his feet, and said, "Handle me: a spirit hath not flesh and "bones, as ye see me hav." Thus the writer, unlike Peter and Paul, supposed Jesus to hav his old body; so notably had the story grown in two generations. But "John" goes far beyond. Out of "*some doubted,*" he boldly manufactures the romance of Thomas. He invents a spear-wound in Jesus's side large enough to receive Thomas's hand, and makes Thomas exclaim, "My Lord and *my God.*" The moderns, assuming that these Gospels were written in the very first age, ar naturally confounded, and see no reasonable intermediate hypothesis.

In this second stage it was necessary to modify and refashion the idea of Messiah. "He was to *suffer* "before entering into his glory." A truly new doctrin, quite irreconcilable with Isaiah ix. and xi., and with Micah v. 2—8, the very sources of Messianic expectation. Messiah was still to be personal Ruler on Earth, still to sit with his faithful saints on a royal throne; but he had now *to come back* from heaven and so assume his dominion.

Daniel's prophecy was made the basis. "One like a "Son of Man," (that is, he who had called himself *the* Son of Man) would come in the "clouds of heaven." This mythological picture was made cardinal, with the addition of "God's trumpet," of which the sound would wake the dead out of their graves.—(1 Thess. iv. 16.) Still the original cry was uttered, "The kingdom of God "is *at hand;*" which continued to be the touchstone of faith for more than fifty years. This earnest expectation and looking for "the Lord from heaven" was made *the primitiv Gospel* of the Church.

The doctrin of a suffering Messiah could only be maintained by arbitrary and uncritical interpretation of the old prophets. But one school of Rabbis was very fanciful. Their methods were available for obtruding the new tenet. By isolating the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah from the chain of prophecy in which it is one link, a specious beginning was made, and various Psalms of moaning and complaint were presently assumed to be "Messianic." The cry of despair which was imputed to the dying Jesus is a quotation from the first verse of Psalm xxii.; which was sufficient to suggest that the Psalm prefigured Messiah's bitter complaints. After this, ver. 18 of this Psalm was likely to be borrowed and *transmuted into history* as we see in so many other cases.—In modern England Daniel ix. 26 is thought to assert that Messiah shall be slain; but in the Greek version it is the Anoint*ing* (not the Anoint*ed*) that shall come to an end. Such also is the rendering by erudite German scholars. No school of Jews in high repute for learning has ever admitted that their prophets taught a suffering Messiah. Evidently Christians betook themselves to the idea, in order to find comfort in their blank disappointment.

But on the day of Pentecost which followed the death

of Jesus, *i. e.*, about seven weeks later, a new event suddenly broke out, of which a *garbled* account is given in the book of Acts. *Garbled* we may boldly pronounce it; for the learned Evangelical Professor Augustus Neander in his History abandons it as indefensible. After long strained religious emotion, many of those present babbled in unintelligible sounds, which were supposed to denote a *Divine Inspiration.* Paul (in 1 Cor.) givs a lucid account of what he personally knew: he makes plain that the strange sounds were not foreign languages, as the writer in the "Acts" pretends; but were explicable only by a new miracle, *i.e.*, by some one gifted divinely with a power of interpretation. All was closely similar to the phenomena displayed in Edward Irving's London Church from 1830 for several years. In modern England the delusion could not long abide unexposed, but it permanently deceived the early Christians. The idea that such carnal and morbid excitement was a special mark of the Divine presence and approval, and was "a gift of the Holy Spirit"—pervades the whole book of Acts. So little discrimination of healthy from morbid emotion do we find in those primitiv Christians, whose warmth of devotion and self-abandonment is often transcendent. We may honor their self-sacrifice and their many virtues, while deploring their weakness of understanding.

This outburst on the day of Pentecost gave a mighty impetus to new enthusiasm. It roused all the disciples into the belief that God was on their side. The Church was, as it were, set on flame. Among the apostles, Peter and John seemed suddenly to enter upon new life. Many new converts were made, and "were *baptized* in "the name of Jesus the Messiah for the remission of sins." These words call for remark. In the three first Gospels no one but John the Baptist baptizes. We ar not

positivly informed that the Apostles and other disciples of Jesus had been baptized by John. It is probable that they were, if it be true that Jesus personally submitted to it and recommended it. We afterwards find in the Acts that baptized disciples of *John* pass as Christians. Jesus is twice made to prefigure his own coming sufferings as a new "Baptism" or Immersion: but in the three Gospels neither does he baptize nor the disciples for him. Only in the fourth Gospel (John iii. 22, and iv. 2) is this asserted. But after this Pentecostal excitement Baptism *in the name of Jesus* becomes the rite for admission to the new church; and the idea naturally went abroad that Jesus himself had instituted it for all future disciples.

The new zeal and enthusiasm kindled earnest remembrance of the preachings of Jesus against the retention of Wealth. Some of the richer men among them, seeking for *perfection* along the lines laid down by Jesus, sold their possessions and brought the proceeds to the apostles. Open tables were spread, at which all the converts, new and old, fed without charge, as in an Essene Establishment. But after a little while, the apostles felt the administration of such funds to be an invidious and unsuitable task, and begged the assembly to elect seven *deacons* (*i.e.*, ministers) for its due discharge. Seven were elected, of whom one was called Stephen. But Stephen presently showed himself far too high for this duty. He forthwith flamed out as a new apostle. His short career is of great importance, and deserves far more attention and closer detail than has been given to it. According to the narrator, "Being full of *faith* and *power*, he did great "*wonders* and *miracles* among the people." No details ar given of these miracles, nor even a hint of their nature; nor how his "*faith*" was displayed: but we learn that he stirred deep resentment in the Jewish rulers by the doctrin which he preached; resentment

wholly new. This makes it important to examin the narrativ closely.

His offence (we ar told) was an avowal that Jesus would destroy the holy place and change the Mosaic law. Change of the law does seem to be implied in the coming kingdom of Messiah; yet no hostile emotion had been awakened when Peter announced this event as impending. Stephen is conjectured to hav added, that in Messiah's kingdom Jews would hav no advantage over Gentiles: but at this era Gentiles were not even admissible into the Church,—a fact which does not commend the conjecture as probable. What is more, the penalty of stoning is not commanded by the law against religious error except when anyone is guilty of introducing some new god; and it is manifest that on this occasion the tribunal was strictly judicial, with priests of high rank presiding. Thus a high probability arises, that the *introduction of the worship of Jesus* was the main guilt imputed. The writer of the "Acts" professes to giv us in great detail Stephen's actual speech of defence. Unless Stephen is maligned by the narrator, he must hav tried the patience of his judges sorely. It is impossible to find out from his speech that any offence was imputed to him. He denies nothing, he defends nothing, he explains nothing. He enters upon a tedious and very superfluous recital of events from Abraham in Mesopotamia downwards,—matters notorious to every boyish Jew; digresses to quote prophecy against the idolatrous; then goes back to Solomon and his temple. At last he bursts out into fierce attack on his judges, as resisting the Holy Spirit, now equally as of old, and entitles them "betrayers and "murderers of The Just One," and "transgressors of the "Law."—Up to this point the tribunal had controlled itself; but (we must infer) it now concluded that he had no defence to offer; that he knew himself guilty of the

crime imputed, and, like a dashing captain of war, thought his best defence lay in counter-attack. Abundant time had been granted. He had used freedom of speech only to abuse it. Conviction of his guilt was now universal. The law of Moses (as alone known to them) strictly forbad mercy, and prescribed the dreadful form of punishment—namely in Deuter. xiii.; for by this chapter they evidently were guided. He discerned anger rising in the countenance of his judges, and aggravated it by declaring that he "saw the heavens opened, "and *the Son of man* standing at the right hand of God." They can hardly hav been ignorant that by *the Son of man* he meant that Jesus of whom he called them betrayers and murderers. A terrible scene followed,—the popular stoning to death, which the law strictly commanded against anyone who might try to bring-in the worship of a new god. It is not credible that the Christian account defines correctly the crime alledged against him. The last words ascribed to Stephen ar an invocation of the dead Jesus as a god: "Lord Jesus! "receive my spirit." We cannot suppose that Stephen now invoked Jesus for the first time. It must hav been his habit, and it can hardly hav been secret. The evident probability is, that *Invocation of Jesus* was the *main offence* imputed; but after such invocation had become universal in the Gentile Church and the Jewish Church was nowhere, the writer of the "Acts" was unwilling to record that the Jews had resented such invocation as *idolatrous*. Of course no Jew could see any difference between the Greek invocation of a dead hero, and the Christian invocation of a dead man, however saintly. If they had been physically unable (as they *may* hav been) to keep Greek hero-worship out of Cæsarea, this was no reason for conniving at the like in Jerusalem itself. Subtle devices which explain away

the charge of idolatry, and evade the Jewish law of Monotheism, *had not yet been concocted* by Christians, nor in any case could hav weight with Jews. The plea that "Jesus is God," if it had been made, could only be understood as setting up two Gods. Hebrew doctors knew well, how idolatry crept in among the heathen by reverence to deceased parents, ancestors, heroes and kings, and that the fatal beginning was through Invocation of the Dead. No plausible fantasies can set aside the fact, that men who implore aid from an unseen spirit, treat that spirit as omnipresent on this globe and indefinit in power. Thus they virtually raise it into a second god, who in their hearts dethrones the One Supreme. Hence the unrelenting attack on Stephen. The words of the law rang in their ears, "Thine eye shall not pity him, "neither shalt thou spare, were it thy brother, the son "of thy mother." Let Christians attack the law: one might praise them for that. But when they call the law divine, and bitterly censure the Jews for obeying it, how can one then praise them?

This tragedy was the beginning of a wider persecution. No doubt, all Christians were suspected of complicity in Stephen's guilt. Saul, a disciple of Gamaliel, (Saul, better known to us as Paul) was eager in enmity, and went to distant cities as inquisitor of like criminality. No similar outbreak is recorded until about A.D. 63, which will be noticed below. Why Herod Agrippa put to death James the son of Zebedee (Acts xii. 2) no hint is given: only it is said, that by it Herod "pleased the "Jews." For no religious offence short of imputed idolatry, would the Jews approve. They *may* hav been glad that Herod relieved them from the odious necessity of another popular movement of violence; but this is only one possibility. We must be contented with ignorance why this James was slain. With this excep-

tion, the Christians of Jerusalem seem to hav long lived in peace with the priestly rulers. We must infer that none of them avowed themselves followers of Stephen's doctrin; which by reasonable interpretation seems to mean, that the Church in Jerusalem did not teach nor practise Invocation of Jesus. In the extant epistle of James, long President of that Church, no hint can be found to justify the practice; no allusion to it; not even such a formula as "The *favor* [grace] of our Lord Jesus "be with you," nor any word which could offend a Jew however bigoted. In "the Lord's Prayer" Jesus did not teach the disciples to introduce his name into their worship. Perhaps Stephen originated the practice.— This subject is brought up again in the doctrin of Paul's gospel.

Another remarkable event, cardinal to the history, soon followed,—namely, the admission of Gentile converts to the Church. The chief man was a Roman centurion (or petty captain) of the Italian band at Cæsarea, by name Cornelius, previously known by Jews to be devout. As the tale is given us in the "Acts," a discourse of the apostle Peter so moved the Italian audience, that the Holy Spirit fell upon them: whereupon "*they spake with tongues* and glorified God." Peter accepted the omen (as Greeks might phrase it), saw in it a manifestation of the divine will, proposed baptism and baptized them forthwith.

On his return to Jerusalem murmur arose against him. He had gone in to men uncircumcised and *had eaten with them.* The complaint implied that he had eaten some forbidden food. He justified himself (it is said) first, by a dream or vision which bade him kill and eat; a voice saying, "what God hath cleansed call not thou "unclean:" secondly, by narrating how the Holy Spirit had fallen upon his audience, just as on themselves at

the first Pentecost. Those who had been thus baptized by the Holy Spirit (Peter argued) might surely be baptized with water. His arguments were convincing, and drew from his hearers the glad words: "Then hath "God granted to the Gentiles also repentance unto life."

Who of us can rightly call these early Christians of Jerusalem narrow-hearted and bigoted? Many such unjust epithets ar poured out against them. These ar they who ar branded by the epithet Judaizers, because they continued to believe their Sacred Scripture, which had taught that all descendants of Abraham must be circumcised, and that Circumcision had a religious value. Rather might one here deride them for the ease with which they resigned their old prejudices. Evidently they were glad to hav their hearts and minds enlarged: what more could we expect? Born and bred in that atmosphere, they inherited its errors with its wisdom. They could not be wide in knowledge, nor sage in caution, as ar we, eighteen centuries later. Their belief in the Holy Tongues, we must pity. Peter's vision they seem to hav interpreted metaphorically, not as abolishing ceremonial restrictions on food, but as establishing that comradeship with converted Gentiles was not a defilement. But it is possible that Peter himself was led by it to hold the prohibitions on food with a looser hand.

We here attain a critical fact defining a new error in the four Gospels. We now see that the disciples had never learned from Jesus, that Gentiles were to be admitted into his Church. Hitherto they had supposed that it was to consist of "a select remnant" of Jews only. A supernatural revelation (for so Peter's dream or vision was esteemed) had been necessary to teach them the opposit: to teach them indeed that the "Good "News" was to be preached to all nations, and that Gentiles were admissible to baptism. We infer that all

passages in the Gospels which represent Jesus as contemplating a world-wide church ar later fictions; and in particular the close of Matthew's Gospel is anachronistic and untrue. Jesus cannot hav told them to go into all nations and baptize them in the name of the Holy Trinity. Had he done so, then neither Peter's dream nor the Holy Tongues would hav been needed. Peter, when arraigned for baptizing converted Gentiles, would simply hav pleaded the solemn last commands of Jesus as his sufficient justification. Since he makes absolutely no allusion hereto, the fact (as told in the "Acts") proves that Peter had never received such commands. We also now understand somewhat better why Jesus did not take precautions that his sacred words should be accurately conveyed to the many distant nations who were to be converted. Though Matthew makes him giv definit charge to teach his discourses to foreigners, yet in fact he had neither design nor foresight that his "Gospel" would be preached to foreigners; much less that his discourses would be preserved, transmitted and translated.

The argument by which modern Christians try to evade these inferences is truly astonishing. They say, that before the Holy Spirit in tongues of fire sat upon the disciples, the apostles were so carnal and dull of mind that they could not understand the words of Jesus, even when he spoke plainly. If our books ar at all credible, his speech was notoriously often far from plain; Matthew says, was purposely obscure. Grant that this rose out of the depth of spiritual mysteries in which he dealt: yet when he spoke of matters external, which a wholly unspiritual man or a child could understand, then it becomes ludicrous to impute the apostolic ignorance to dulness of mind. When Paul declared that Gentiles might enter the church without circumcision, every Jew, however carnal, understood him: yet *we ar expected*

to believe, that when Jesus commanded his apostles to preach to the Gentiles and baptize them, these apostles, being very carnal and dull, could not understand him; —nay, not even after they had been illuminated by the Holy Spirit did they remember his commands.—But this is to expect stupidity in us.

After the principle had been established that the uncircumcised were admissible to the Christian church, a hope arose that, from among heathen proselytes to Judaism converts might be made to Christianity. Few of these received circumcision: but they had shown independence of mind in throwing off their hereditary mythology: they were presumably devout persons, and not likely to resist innovation in religion so stiffly as born Jews. In fact the first convert, Cornelius, seems to hav been previously "a proselyte of the gate." But of necessity every Christian Jew who believed in the only natural sense of the Hebrew prophets, and had not learned the art of blurring the contrast of Jew and Gentile therein established as sharply as possible, was led even by kindness and sympathy to wish that every converted Gentile should be incorporated into the Hebrew body; so that, instead of being one of the faithful Gentile vassals and servants, bringing tribute and performing menial offices for the Holy People under Messiah's reign, he should himself become one of the sacred ruling caste. One short passage from the later Isaiah is a clue to all beside: lxi. 5, 6,—"Strangers "shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the "alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers: "but ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord; men "shall call you the Ministers of our God. Ye shall eat "the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye "boast yourselves." Such was the exalted rank into which Jesus, descending from heaven with a shout, with

the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, would establish his faithful Jewish disciples. While they believed this, love to Gentile converts made them long to embrace them as fully graduated Jews: and how *could* any of them throw off belief in that glorious later Isaiah? Nay, were they not now basing their belief in a Messiah *who had to suffer* before ruling in glorified Zion, mainly on the words of this very prophet?—We cannot therefor wonder,—we must almost take for granted—that a strong and powerful movement came forth from Jerusalem, *urging* in much love and seeking to *persuade* Gentile converts to adopt circumcision, the sabbath and all the peculiarities of Mosaism.

In fact, this was no question internal to Christianity. In the historian Josephus (Antiq. xx. 2 § 3—5) we hav a very interesting account concerning Izates, the young prince of Adiabênè and his mother Queen Helena. The prince, while residing abroad, was converted to Judaism by a Hebrew merchant called Ananias. At the same time his mother remaining at home was converted by *another* Jew. When, by the death of the king of Adiabênè, Izates was called home to take his father's place, mother and son were alike delighted to find their mutual zeal for the pure monotheistic faith. The young man was eager to become a complete Jew by circumcision. The mother dissuaded, and appeal was made to Ananias. He also dissuaded, saying that without circumcision Izates could do what was vastly better,—*revere God;* and with the mother he thought it unwise to stir up violent feeling in the nation by submitting to a *foreign* ceremony. But after this, came a third Jew, Eleazar from Galilee, whom the historian calls most exact as to Jewish customs. This man finding the young king to be reading the books of Moses, vehemently censured him, as "learning and not obeying." Izates was ambitious of

perfection, accepted circumcision and thereby encountered much calamity, temporarily losing his throne and strangely regaining it. These events were under the empire of Claudius Cæsar. The sons and brothers of Izates were brought before Titus Cæsar after Jerusalem was captured. Thus the chronology is fixed. The three Jewish proselyters gained access to royal persons contemporaneously with the career of Paul of Tarsus. Queen Helena went on pilgrimage to the temple of Jerusalem. She arrived in the midst of a great famine, bringing with her much treasure. She at once sent to Alexandria for wheat and to Cyprus for dry figs. Her son, on hearing the news, sent large funds to the leading men in Jerusalem for public relief, and later they continued their liberalities.—Since all this was *after* the death of Jesus, we ar *not* forced to say, that these three Jewish devotees and their royal proselytes were accounted by him to be "children of hell."

Not a word has come down to us that can justly imply any sacerdotal terrors to hav been wielded by those who ar contemptuously called Judaizers: they had no power but kind argumentativ suasion. To us, of course, the suasion is empty of force. We do not believe in any secular domination promised to the Jewish race, or to others who hav accepted the Jewish ceremonial. But it is on the one hand unjust to call these Christians narrow and bigoted for desiring to hav the Gentile converts as *equals* and *partners;* on the other hand it is futile to censure them for believing the evident and plain sense of their great and magnificent prophet. This controversy concerning the value of the Jewish law, and the *advantage* of the Jew over the Gentile was presently to be quickened by the energies and enthusiasm of one man into a furious and deplorable heat. Here it may be added that in the book of Acts (xv.) a solitary occasion is reported, on

which certain Christians from Jerusalem taught the Gentiles, that without circumcision "*they could not be saved.*" But the immediate result of this was (if we accept that narrativ) that the Church in Jerusalem collectivly reproved such teaching. If by "salvation" *acceptance with God* was meant, the doctrin was narrower than that of the Pharisees, who admitted proselytes of the gate. When the mother church so promptly disowned it, we may infer, even from the book of Acts itself, that the error was an exceptional indiscretion, and cannot hav had any deep roots or permanent strength. Yet another possibility must not be forgotten. If the Judaizers *only* taught that without circumcision converts could not take *equal rank with Jews* in Messiah's kingdom, this might be unfairly represented in *the oral tradition* of the Church fifty years later,—after Jerusalem had perished,—as teaching that without circumcision *they could not be saved.*

CHAPTER X.

PAUL AND JAMES.

The introduction of Gentiles into the Christian faith before long broke the Church in twain: but the actual process was not one of natural development. It could not hav been pre-imagined, and it needs special and detailed narrativ. Happily we ar here landed on solid historical ground. We hold Paul's own letters, the letters of that pupil of Gamaliel who played a leading part in the first persecution of Christians. We may rest on them with the same confidence as on those of our own

contemporaries. But he writes as an eager controversialist against Christians of the earliest school. We hav not their statements. To accept his bitter accusations of them as a complete and final account, is not the way to truth or justice. With such light as we hav, we must do our best to *imagin* their side of the case.

This is not easy. For from childhood we hav been trained into contempt and aversion for the "Judaizers," that is, for the primitiv Christians of Jerusalem. Paul, we ar told, was "an apostle;" *therefor* all that he wrote must be true. But Paul sharply opposed Peter. Peter was made an apostle by Jesus; Paul had no credentials but his own. His apostleship rests on his *own assertion* that he was "called to be an apostle" (by a private vision?) after the death of Jesus. In a difference between two apostles, apostolic infallibility cannot be ascribed to either.

Paul was at first called Saul in the book of Acts; no reason is assigned for his change of name. But since he was by birth a Roman citizen, and Paullus is a well-known family name at Rome, we may conjecture that Saul was his personal Hebrew name and Paullus the name which as a Roman, he used and preferred.—In this second stage of Christianity, two names, *Paul* and *James*, represent the two contending schools. The collision between these two was not confined to the question of Justification as understood by Luther. It took a much wider sweep; namely, Did Christianity overthrow and annihilate the Mosaic law? James replied: "Certainly not; not one jot or tittle: we Jews ar bound "to the law, as well as to circumcision and the sabbath; "*only* Gentile Christians ar free." Paul replied: "Nay, "but all the ceremonies ar mere types and *shadows:* the "*substance* is in Christ; (Coloss. ii. 17) Jews ar free, "equally as Gentiles: Christ has made *me* free, *though*

"*I am a Jew.*"—It is natural, almost necessary, for us moderns to admire the breadth of Paul's view, just as we admire Pythagoras in Astronomy. But in the actual controversy we hav to consider by what arguments Paul vindicated his position, and what personal authority he assumed in pronouncing that he had a right to dictate. That the living Jesus never taught the doctrin of Paul, is so obvious that no words ar here needed. Paul professed to hav learnt it by a special revelation to himself: James continued reverently to obey his Master and Lord.

James son of Alphæus, (strangely entitled James *the less*) is supposed to hav been *first cousin* of Jesus, because both by Paul and by the historian Josephus he is called *brother* of Jesus. It is agreed that at least after the death of James son of Zebedee (of whom nothing is reported but that he was put to death by Herod Agrippa the first) this other James became *President*, or first Bishop, of the Church in Jerusalem. Paul was a far greater man than James, if greatness be measured by the magnitude and permanence of his doings; but if we ought to esteem men chiefly for modesty, for fairness and sobriety of mind, in these qualities James was apparently superior. We know Paul better by his numerous letters. This *controversy* is opened most sharply by himself in his Epistle to the Galatians, which splendidly reveals the man. Perhaps Martin Luther, who commented upon it at enormous length, judged it to be the most valuable of his epistles. To us it is certainly valuable as signally displaying all Paul's weakest points.

If he prided himself on anything, it was on his skill and sagacity in interpreting the Hebrew scriptures. It is worth while to examin his use of them in this epistle. (1) "Unto Abraham and his seed" (argues he, iii. 16) "were the promises made, He saith not *unto seeds*, as of

"many, but as of one, and *to thy seed*, which is Christ." At first this strikes one with amazement. The writer seems not to know that a noun in the singular number may denote a collection of individuals. But on considering that Paul himself (Rom. ix. 7) calls the Jews *the seed* of Abraham, and does not say *seeds*, it appears that we ought not to impute this enormous and ridiculous blunder to real ignorance and stupidity, but only to haste. He fancies he sees an argument for his purpose, and he *jumps at it* without allowing himself time to think.—And ar we really to accept so hot-headed a writer as guided by a secret divine power too high for our criticism? This attempt at reasoning is so ludicrous, as to forbid deference to his judgment, however great our admiration of other qualities in him.

(2) He proceeds to build upon this by argument, with which few moderns would hav patience. It suffices to remark, that he closes with the wild words,—"The law "(of Moses) was ordained by angels in the hand of a "mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, "but God is one."—Was he going to sleep as he wrote? or will anyone maintain that words ar lost from the text?

(3) He undertakes to prove that the death of Christ has annihilated all the ceremonial of Moses, or as elsewhere he puts it, has nailed the ordinances to his cross. His proof is as follows. "*It is written*, Cursed is every "one that continueth not in all things that ar written in "the book of the law, to do them. Christ hath redeemed "us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for "us: *for it is written*, Cursed is every one that hangeth "on a tree." At first sight this argument is quite enigmatic. Most unwillingly we ar forced to see that he means, "So impotent was the law really to curse "Christ, that by cursing him, it has made its curse vain: "it has lost cursing power; it is like a bee which has

"tried to sting a buffalo, and has stung out its vitals: "the law has thus lost all power of *prohibiting*, and may "safely and rightly be disobeyed."

But if the curse fell *justly* on Messiah, how can this make the curse void? and if *unjustly*, then how is the law "holy, just and good"? Did Paul know what he was writing? Hardly. The law which he quotes (Deut. xxi. 23) on sanitary grounds commanded the early burial of a corpse. If a criminal was hanged, he must be buried before night. His body had become an accursed thing,—that is, a pollution,—ἐναγὲς as a Greek would say. Snatching at the word *Curse*, Paul confounds physical pollution incident to the corpse of a saint with the moral offence of disobeying a sacred law: strange want of moral sensitivness! He argues: "The body "of Messiah (having been hanged) is pronounced by the "law to be an accursed thing: hereby the law has "manifestly *so put itself in the wrong*, that henceforth no "one need care what it curses or what it commands; all "its ordinances ar made null and void, as if nailed to "the cross." Among these ordinances he makes circumcision prominent, all through this epistle, and indeed everywhere; and forgets that circumcision is older than Moses! Forgets? but if in haste he forgot, he cannot hav been permanently ignorant. *In his belief* the Most High prescribed to the Hebrew nation by Abraham (Gen. xvii. 7—10), as AN EVERLASTING COVENANT, the duty of circumcision. That now goes for nothing with Paul, because Moses enacted a sanitary precaution on a wholly different matter! Those may justify Paul, who care not a straw what Jehovah is said to hav said to Abraham, nor what promises of high rank and grandeur the prophets made to Israel. The command of Jehovah to Abraham is so clear and positiv, that the attempt to argue it down might in those days seem a reckless pro-

fanity. We do not need high imagination to understand how outrageous such argument must hav seemed to Jews, devout or patriotic, whether Christian or not. It goes far beyond exempting Gentiles from the Mosaic ceremonies: it exempts Jews as completely as Gentiles, justifying the accusation in Acts xxi. 21; for Paul's *argument* goes as far, if his *intention* was otherwise.

Orthodox Christians surely ought to see that his argument is utterly delusiv. His boast that his doctrin on this subject was given him by divine revelation (Eph. iii. 3) must be accounted a folly, unless the Pentateuch is fundamentally renounced. Nay, Paul shows, that in calling the law "holy, just and good," his sentiment was transient and unsubstantial. In real fact he professes to look down upon it as childish lore, which he has outgrown—Gal. iv. 1—7. He had no more reverence for it than had any Greek philosopher. He tried to argue it down, not by philosophy, but *as a Rabbi*, by quoting its own texts against it: hence his manifest failure.

(4) His allegories ar equally wild. He complacently undertakes to *teach the law* to those Galatian converts who ar disposed to embrace it; and assures them that Abraham's two wives ar an allegory,—Hagar, the slave-concubine, typifies mount Sinai, who is in bondage with her children (thus *assuming* that all who observe the law ar *in bondage!*) — and that Sarah typifies Heavenly Jerusalem.—Anything can thus be proved.—In the same spirit he teaches in the first Epistle to Corinthians that the Israelites in the wilderness were baptized unto Moses *in the cloud and in the sea*, and drank of that spiritual *rock which followed them* — (a rock followed them!! a fancy of his own, it seems) and that rock was Christ.— Such argument can conjure up any amount of arbitrary mythology. It is the lowest type of Rabbinism.

Paul's notion of the law as "added because of trans-
"gression," and as the centre of "sin, bondage and curse,"
is in wonderful contrast to the joyful delight in it ex-
pressed in the 19th, the 119th, and many other Psalms.
It may be said, "Those Psalms were perhaps written
"earlier than Josiah's reign. *The law of Moses was not*
"*yet known.* The Psalmist by 'the law' meant the
"general Hebrew precepts, known to them partly from
"the prophets, partly by the traditions of daily life."
Be it so: but how speaks James? Did *he* regard the
law as a bondage, or a source of curses? Nay, remark-
ably enough, he entitles it "the law of *liberty*."—But
pass we now to the substance of the Epistle to the
Galatians, and its occasion.

Paul had converted these Galatians to his own Gospel.
He is careful to style it his own. Aware that it gravely
differed from that which might be taught them from
another quarter, he took the precaution of charging them
to account any man accursed who should teach them any
other Gospel than that which he had delivered to them.
The report comes to him, *not* that they hav in heart
thrown aside his Gospel, *but* that they hav adopted the
law of Moses *concurrently with it.* They might naturally
think it impossible for any Christian to hold Mosaism
and Christianism incompatible. How could the union
offend their first teacher, — himself of the tribe of
Benjamin, and often acting as a law-abiding Hebrew,
when he wished to ingratiate himself with strict Jews?
—But Paul resented it gravely. Having learned Christ
from him, their minds became his property. They were
not free to learn anything from anyone else. He reminds
them of the solemn *curse* which he had pronounced upon
all who taught any other Gospel than that which he had
taught: and that there may be no mistake, he defines
this as applying to certain FALSE BRETHREN "who came

"from James" and "trouble them," and of these he says (v. 12) "I wish that *they were even cut off.*" He elsewhere complains of persecution incited by the Jews: but it would appear from these words that Paul would hav been, not sorry, but even glad, if some Herod or Nero had put to death these troublesome advocates of the law of Moses.

James beautifully answers Paul's monstrous curse of brother Christians. While defining True Religion as depending on Deed, that is, on Kindness and Purity, not on notions or knowledge [called or miscalled Faith], he presses the danger of rash words, saying that a man's religion is vain, who bridles not his tongue; that the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity, an unruly evil, full of deadly poison; wherewith at one moment we bless God, in the next *we curse man!* My brethren, these things ought not to be. Who is a wise man? Let him show out of good conduct his works *with meekness of wisdom.* But if ye hav bitter envying and strife in your hearts, THIS wisdom cometh not down from above, but is earthly, from the carnal intellect, such as even a devil may hav.

Paul richly earned these censures. As here he calls the brethren who came from James "false brethren "privily brought in" and curses them; so in 2nd Corinthians he styles the same class "false apostles, deceitful "workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of "Christ; and no marvel: for Satan himself also is trans-"formed into an angel of light." Moreover to the Galatians he sneers at "James, Peter and John, who "*seemed to be somewhat; but whatever they were, it maketh* "*no matter to me.*" Evidently he knew that on one or other important matter he had the weight of the apostles at Jerusalem against him; and he glories in the public rebuke which he gave to Peter at Antioch.—We hav not Peter's account of the affair.

When Paul was so vehement, so self-confident, so insulting, it must not be assumed that the opposit party was always meek. In the outset they were wrong, according to Acts xv. 1. Rather must we expect that some of them sharply retaliated, and that the bitterness and strife which James deprecated was shown on both sides. But the *cursing system* was Paul's invention, and it is universally agreed that James pursued a just and reasonable course, neither pressing into Mosaism an unwilling Christian Gentile, nor forbidding, to one who desired it, incorporation with the Hebrew body: whereas Paul invented a prohibition, supported it by an extravagant assumption of authority, and (one can hardly doubt) by conveniently misunderstanding the doctrin of his opponents.

What James would hav replied to the words addressed by Paul to Peter, we need not doubt: "if righteousness "come by the law," says Paul, "then Christ is dead in "vain." James would say: "Righteousness, we all "agree, *consists in* obedience to God's law: therefor, of "necessity, righteousness can only come by God's law. "Nevertheless, God has not laid on Gentiles that law to "which we Jews ar bound. A Gentile Christian is free to "join our Hebrew nation, free also not to join: *whichever* "*he does, affects not his state before God.* You hav no "right to reproach him for desiring to join our com- "munity. As to saying that 'Christ is then dead in "vain,' this simply means that *according to your private* "*theory* Christ died in order to annihilate the law of Moses. "WE HAV NOT SO LEARNED CHRIST, and your contempt for "the everlasting covenant which God made with Abraham "does not commend itself to us."

After all, what is the basis of Paul's unmeasured self-assertion? He himself tells us, and throws a flood of light over his position and his character. His first claim

is, that his apostleship is wholly INDEPENDENT; his Gospel is superior to that taught in Jerusalem. He is an apostle, *not of men*, neither *by man*. He has learnt nothing from any man, not even from those at Jerusalem who seem to be pillars. His assertion that he saw no apostle in Jerusalem but Peter and James, three years after his conversion, seems to him so important, that he confirms it by a solemn oath, "behold! before God! "I lie not."—On what then does his apostleship rest? He explains: "When it pleased God *to reveal his Son in* "*me*, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." He had *an inward revelation!* Just so, in 2 Cor. xii. he claims "to hav been caught up *into the third heaven.*" To us it might seem needless to add so solemnly: "whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell, "*God knoweth;*" but there he heard "unutterable words;" again to us necessarily unimportant, because unutterable. Of course he regarded this revelation and this ecstacy as preternatural: but he makes no allusion to the vision of Jesus in the clouds, striking him blind, nor to the scales that fell off his eyes when Ananias laid hands on him, and conferred on him the Holy Spirit. The last is virtually denied by him, and since he is silent concerning the external miracles, they must be a later fiction. But no inward revelation made to *one* man can ever be a fit argument for belief to *another*. Paul himself is anxious (1 Cor. ii. 5) that "the faith of his converts should not "stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." This at once condemns his authoritativ teaching of things beyond human cognizance. If one of his Galatian converts were asked, "*Why* do you believe that Jesus of "Nazareth lived long before his human birth and was "the very and unique Son of God?" he has no answer, but: "Because Paul, who had a vision, or some sort of "inward revelation, *tells* me so, and *knows all about it;*"

thus the convert's faith stands not on the power of God, but on Paul's sagacity in discriminating divine visions from human dreams. Paul's presumption goes so far, as not to desire his private convictions, interpretations and impressions to be corrected by comparison with the creed of those who had had personal relations with Jesus. In fear of lowering his claims of independence, he purposely holds aloof, and remains contentedly ignorant of the teachings of the living Jesus. Meanwhile his innovations in Christian doctrin ar enormous and momentous: he well might proudly claim them as *his own* Gospel. First of all, it is not clear, that anyone before Paul adopted for Jesus the title "Son of God" in an exclusiv sense. The Jews called angels "Sons of God," and would no more hav shrunk from so entitling all good men, than we to use the phrase *children of God.* But with Paul, Son of God is a unique title, and is elsewhere interpreted by him that Christ is "the *image* of the invisible God, "and *firstborn of all creation*," also that he was the agent of God in all after-creation; so that Paul (1 Cor. viii. 5,6) sums up his contrast to the Polytheism of the Pagans, in words which to Jews would only mean "One chief God, "and a second inferior god." He says: Instead of gods many and lords many, "We hav one God, the Father, "*of* whom (*ex* quo) ar all things, and one Lord, Jesus, "*through* whom (per quem, by whom *as an agent or* "*instrument*) ar all things." Never for a moment does he pretend that THESE TWO AR ONE. Nevertheless, towards Jesus he cherishes and exercises all the sentiments in which divine worship consists. He trusts in his power and protection; he rests hope upon him; he makes petition to him; he receives commands from him; he inwardly and habitually holds communion with him as *ever present.* What is this, but to believe in a second god, inferior in rank, holding derived power, though

morally perfect? To *us* it may seem, that to believe in a hundred gods, all morally perfect and among themselves harmonious, is consistent with the purest piety, and is far better than to believe in One God who indulges in petty passions: but the Jews had not reached that stage of thought, and it is unreasonable to doubt that many of the Jerusalem Christians judged Paul to offend against monotheism as taught by Moses and Samuel.

If anyone now were to advance a new revelation, on the strict lines of Paul, such as, that "the archangel "Raphael was the first being created by the Son of God," it would be easier to accept, than if for Raphael one substituted some historical man; say--Moses. Yet to believe this of Raphael, simply because *some pious man* had had an inward revelation to that effect, would not be judged compatible with ordinary good sense. In rejecting such evidence, no one would think that we were disparaging the man. Paul therefor, in expecting men to believe heavenly mysteries essentially shut out from human knowledge, (such as, the *First Creativ Action* of him who is Supreme and Invisible,) on the testimony of *Paul* that they were inwardly revealed *to him*, does not commend to us his sobriety of thought. He teaches us to beware of accepting him as competent to disclose to us the counsels and mind of God. He mistakes the laws imposed on the human mind.

We see in Paul's Epistle to the Romans that he could not escape the question, "What advantage then hath the "Jew?" Knowing, as we do, his doctrin, to us it must seem that his honest reply ought to be, "*None whatever.* "Zion and Jacob in the prophets mean the *spiritual* "Israel; *that is*, Christian converts of any nation." But he was not quite brave enough to avow this: we see his evasiv reply, Rom. iii. 2—"*Much every way;* chiefly "that unto them *were* committed the oracles (τὰ λόγια, the

"sacred utterances) of God." Thus the *chief* advantage is not a *present* advantage at all, but one enjoyed in a former generation. The question was: What advantage *hath* the Jew? not, What *had* he once? In Paul's mind, the Gentile Christian had access to the oracles, and advantage from them, in entire equality with the Jew. Thus, in his controversy with Jews, Paul could not always afford to meet argument squarely. The topic recurs, less formally, in Rom. ix. 4, 5; but there too the advantages ascribed to the Jews ar all in the past.

In this Epistle to the Galatians, and elsewhere, a "glorying in the cross" appears to be claimed by Paul as something peculiar to himself, something from which the Jewish Christians shrink: certainly nothing of the sort comes out in James's epistle: James does not suggest that the deplorable death on the cross was in any way beneficial to mankind. But Paul further has a dialect of his own, and a new vocabulary needed for new doctrin. He is dead to the law by the body of Christ; he is dead with Christ; he is crucified with Christ; he has put on Christ; he is married to Christ; he is baptized into the death of Christ; he is in Christ, and Christ in him, Christ liveth in him, and he livs his life by faith in Christ.—What more can possibly be said concerning the Supreme God?

And yet by Athanasius Paul ought to hav been accounted a direful heretic. Paul's epistles thoroughly justify Arius, who believed the Son of God to hav been the earliest indeed of created beings, but still *created*, and *not eternal* in the past. St. John in the Apocalypse agrees with Paul, calling Jesus Christ "the beginning of the creation of God." So entirely did the Catholic church deviate from the early Gentile church in less than three centuries.

What was Paul's doctrin concerning the *Reconciliation* (of man to God) by the blood of the cross, is still much controverted; treatises ar written on opposit sides. He certainly teaches that by the blood of his cross Christ somehow *made peace* not only between Jew and Gentile, but also between God and man; and that "faith in his "blood" is essential to peace with God. The metaphor afterwards culminates in the Apocalypse, where the saints *wash their robes white* in this blood.

Whatever was the efficacy imagined in "the blood," it certainly was a great change for the worse from the simple Hebrew doctrin, which taught that God is a Father, who beyond all other epithets, deserves that of Ever Merciful; who knows man's frailty, pities it, makes allowance for it, and to the penitent forgivs transgression. Here is no difficulty imagined about Reconciliation, nor any apparatus of *death or blood* to effect it: no idea that it is self-righteous to find no need of a Mediator and Intercessor, a Divine Usher, Testator and Representativ. A simple and reasonable belief has been here corrupted into something artificial, arbitrary, obscure and opposed to general good sense. Truly he makes Christians pay a high price for getting rid of typical ceremonies.

It is a mysterious reproach which Paul casts on the Judaizers, that they teach circumcision *in order to escape persecution.* Thus too he says: "If I teach circumcision, "why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence "of the cross ceased." Romans had no wish to promote circumcision. The Jerusalem Church did not require it of Cornelius. Pharisees did not try to enforce it on proselytes; therefor its *non*-enforcement by Paul *cannot* hav been the main cause of anger against him. Some deeper collision is concealed under this talk about circumcision. Elsewhere the truth is manifest. That which may rea-

sonably be held to be *Stephen's* offence was *Paul's* offence with the Jews. He not merely invoked a dead saint, as an occasional act, but established an entire system of worshipping an inferior God.

Thus by three separate practices he exasperated the Jews: 1. By the deadly sin of idolatry, as they necessarily viewed it. This would everywhere be *reported* against him, but before a tribunal could seldom be proved, unless his actual epistles were produced. Once he was stoned, like Stephen, and left for dead, probably on this accusation. 2. He taught "the Jews who were "among the Gentiles" that the Mosaic law was abolished by the death of Jesus. This may hav been punished (mercifully, in Jewish esteem) by thirty-nine stripes, which he five times received. 3. He alternately broke or kept the legal rules, according as convenient for winning favor. What Peter may hav done once through weakness,—if Paul's assertion (Gal. ii. 12) is true,—Paul tells us, he himself did from systematic policy, (1 Cor. ix. 20). This must hav degraded him in moral repute.—In Alexandria pre-eminently, but in many other cities also, Jewish tribunals had large power over men of their own nation. In this way Paul fell under their Jurisdiction.

But his worship of Jesus suggests another explanation of his charge against the Judaizers,—that they planned to avoid persecution. No doubt, as Paul himself could not in Jerusalem escape attack as *idolatrous*, it would be dangerous there to be accounted one of his partizans. Hero-worship could not be tolerated in the Holy City. Paul by it moved not only animosity among the unconverted Jews, but grave disapproval in Christians of the primitiv school; and if (what was to be expected) some of them complained that *his doctrin exposed all the Christians in Jerusalem to unjust attack*, it gave him an

opening to say scornfully, that their opposition to him turned on their fear of persecution. Yet certain it was, that no preaching of circumcision would save a Christian from persecution in Jerusalem, if with Paul he also preached the worship of Jesus. On this account he cannot be esteemed accurate and candid in his representation of his opponents; though the first group of these in Galatia *may* hav been the rash zealots whose extravagance James and the Jerusalem Church ar said to hav disowned. Neither he, nor the writer of the Acts, was likely to make clear *all* the offence which Paul gave. They state only the idea of *compulsory* circumcision, in which the ultra-zealots were wrong, and say nothing about the charge of idolatry incident to Paul's new gospel.

With many eminent virtues, Paul had the defects often met in enthusiasts of novel opinion. While he was, not tender only and affectionate, but warm in love, to all who accepted him as a guide, it is more than doubtful whether he could brook an equal. Rather it may seem, that anyone who opposed any of his special tenets roused quickly his indignation, as opposing *divine truth*. He does not pretend to possess the gift of miraculous healing; though in the Acts (xiii. 11) not only was Elymas the sorcerer struck blind by his word, but (xiv. 8) a cripple is healed, an evil spirit (xvi. 18) is cast out; even napkins (xix. 12) taken from Paul's body heal divers maladies! But Paul made no attempt to cure his fellow-laborer Epaphroditus (Philip. ii. 23–27) when dangerously sick by his side, nor yet to relieve Trophimus (2 Tim. iv. 20) whom he left at Miletus sick. So little can we trust the book of Acts concerning miracles.

Sad to say, men who by honest enthusiasm rush into a false position seldom can complete their career without

pretensions less clearly honest. Paul cannot wholly afford to avow that he is *not* a miracle-worker. In singularly vague high-sounding words he says to a strange church (Romans xv. 18): "I will not dare to "speak of any of those things which God hath *not* wrought "by me, through mighty signs and wonders by the "power of the Spirit of God;" and to the Corinthians he seems to put forth a threat that he will inflict miraculous sickness on a certain immoral church-member. "I hav decided already" (says he, 1 Cor. v. 3—5) "*to* "*deliver such a one to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh*, "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord "Jesus." Satan here, as prince of demons, stands for any demon who can cause disease. Paul thus announces: "I will inflict disease on him for his spiritual benefit." So later (2 Cor. xiii. 10) "If I come again, I will not "spare, *since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me. . . .* "Therefor I write, lest I use sharpness, according to *the* "*power which the Lord hath given me* for edification, not "for destruction." The threat is worded with ingenious obscurity. Again, though his good sense led him to disparage the noisy babble called Spiritual Tongues (1 Cor. xiv.), yet he adds "I thank my God that *I speak* "*with tongues more than ye all.*"

The quotations given in the last paragraph savor more of cunning, than of honorable simplicity. "The Jews "seek for a sign," elsewhere says Paul, "and the Greeks "seek after wisdom;" frankly admitting that he has *no* pretensions to giv a *sign*, *i.e.*, a miraculous credential: yet in these passages he *insinuates* that it is not from want of power, but only from tenderness. Thus does erring Enthusiasm generate Fanaticism even in nobler souls.

Mr. Hampden (afterwards Bishop) in our day appealed from Paul disputing and philosophizing to Paul exhorting morally. Weak as he is in logic and in literary inter-

pretation, yet as a practicable moralist he is generally admirable. The chief exception rises out of the primitiv Gospel itself. By teaching that Christ was speedily to overturn all existing rule and govern the world justly himself, it *annihilated zeal for earthly improvement.* Who could care for improving the laws or the tribunals, or for any enterprize needing time to achieve and still longer time to bear fruit, if he expected Messiah in a few years to make all things new? Even slavery is with Paul indifferent; marriage also is unimportant, because the fashion of this world passeth away. Patriotism is superseded, because *the Christian's citizenship is in heaven* (Philip. iii. 20): therefor "to mind earthly things" is a shame. On this side all apostolic morality is weak. We could not expect him to rise above his age in regard to the rights of women; yet it is truly extraordinary that in treating on the expediency of giving or not giving a maiden into marriage (1 Cor. vii. 38), he does not regard *her* wishes or judgment to need for a moment to be consulted! Truth forces one to say something more. We may not *blame* him, that his idea of marriage was so little edifying; that he treated even the desire of it as an infirmity. We see that he intended to be humble, when he attributed his own freedom from so troublesome a desire to a peculiar gift of God. But the stubborn fact recurs upon us, that on this topic a young Englishman will find Walter Scott and plenty of other non-religious modern writers more elevating and *more purifying* then Paul. Paul's doctrin was made offensivly prominent by Luther, and no doubt has been calamitous to many an unhappy monk. Undeniably, marriage, instead of being exalted, is degraded by Paul's treatment. But with these exceptions, his moral excellencies ar broad, solid and fruitful; his moral enthusiasm glorious. The form of his doctrin gave him a vast

advantage over James and Jesus. They exhorted men to work *for* life, Paul exhorted to accept life freely given, and work *from* it. Faith is with him the *seed* of life, works the *after-fruit.* They could only say, "Do right, "Obey the law, Shun worldly pollutions, Renounce evil "wealth, and you shall be saved." Paul can tell of an "unspeakable gift of God," which men hav only gladly to accept; after which he calls them in *gratitude* to walk worthy of their high calling. "I beseech you," says he, "by the mercies of God—!" Beyond a doubt the human heart answers far more readily to this appeal than to any prudential warning against a predicted divine judgment. No Gospels had yet been written. Paul did not hamper himself by caring about Jesus in the flesh. He did not do what all Christians now do, tie themselves down to the portrait of Jesus as set forth in our books; but drew, either from his private "revelation" or his own free interpretation of old Scriptures, his own picture of a Saviour far too amiable to be ever repulsiv; who is assumed to be morally perfect, much on the same grounds as is God himself. No one can believe that the Supreme God has ever *suffered for us:* towards a Saviour who *has* suffered for us, gratitude more easily becomes a passion; then the Son is loved more than the Father; the Mediator gets the heart, and God himself only the bowing of the head.

James, like the Greek philosophers, was too high and pure for his age: he would not preach to it the worship of a dead saint. The pagans liked gods in human form, and Paul humored them by setting up a human god, who had suffered, and therefor could sympathize with suffering;—one nearer to us than (to our dull minds) he who is Infinit, Eternal and Unsusceptible of Passion seems able to be. The same cause, after Jesus had been absorbed into the Trinity, made the worship of the

Virgin and of many dead saints popular. Paul's doctrin avoided the worst evils of idolatry by representing Jesus as morally perfect, the very image of God, a marvellous sympathizing benefactor, preternatural, yet human. He could even draw his history with a free hand as in a heathen mythology. To the Gentiles the Hebrew command of *loving* God appeared impossible. Love, however tempered, seemed impertinent, out of place and even ludicrous.* Reverence and Gratitude were appropriate, but these did not easily become impulsiv, nor at all passionate. Addressing men accustomed to receive magic and marvellous tales without asking for proof, or scrutinizing the moral consistency of a story, Paul announced that the Son of God came down from heaven, took human flesh, endured contempt and suffering, solely to bless mankind in eternal life. Many believed; and the belief often changed them morally, by implanting new affections, new meditations, new hopes, new associations. With such cases in his mind, Paul wrote, "If any man "be in Christ, he is a new creation." The amplitude of this mythology gave to the uneducated a new fund of thought, pure and ennobling in contrast to all the Pagan mythologies, and far more acceptable to these Gentiles, than the meagre and severe doctrin of James,—we may add, of Plato or Epictetus. The unhappy fact was, that the educated asked *proof* of Paul's doctrin, and Paul had no answer but that "it was revealed to him." The Greeks (said he) "*seek after wisdom*,"—a sad reproach! But ought he not rather to hav said, *seek after truth?* If, after hearing Paul's doctrin, a heathen at once accepted it joyfully, without further inquiry, without suspicion, without caution, he would seem in that age "*to receive the kingdom of God as a little child*," he would

* So Aristotle calls it. Εἴ τις φαίη φιλεῖν Δία, τέλειον ἂν εἴη.

earn congratulation; thanks would be paid to God: but no man of ordinary culture will dare to say that such a convert had sought earnestly after truth, as we ought to seek, and as many Greek philosophers did seek. "*Most "unpainstaking*," old Thucydides would repeat, "is the "quest of truth with these enthusiasts." When Paul found very few educated men to accept *his word* as a guarantee of truth, he moralized on it, nearly as in old days *jealousy* was attributed to God. Jehovah overthrew Tyre "to stain the pride of all glory and bring into "contempt the honorable of the earth." Seest thou not how the God in heaven strikes with his lightning all things that ar lifted up,—high towers, high trees, high hills,—but the little ones fret him not at all? Even so, God hides his mysteries from the wise, *that no flesh may glory in his presence.* So far, the moralizing of Paul is nearly the same as that which is imputed to Jesus. Each of them expects belief without evidence. Each confounds Credulity with Faith. Perhaps each regarded Faith as the special gift of God to an Elect remnant. However beautiful and lovely in some cases the immediate results of some *un*truth may be, yet because it has no solid back-bone, it cannot stand in firm shape. Neither the doctrin nor its results can be permanent. Truth alone can stand the strain of Time: Truth cannot rest on Visions and Dreams, nor on mere Hearsay: Truth cannot be *tested* and *established* without much Incredulity and Criticism, which most religious teachers hav unwisely condemned, which also all Sham Sciences dread.

Yet Paul had great qualities. Though he preached a Christ of his own fancy, careless to learn what Jesus really was, he was the most effectiv preacher of the *name* of Christ that ever existed, and was the chief founder of Gentile Christianity. Possibly guided in part by the spurious book of Enoch, he defined Messiah to be Son of

God, Lord of angels and men, earliest of Created Beings, agent of God in all further Creation, future Judge of living and dead, predestined Ruler on earth, dispenser of all God's favors; and he taught that Jesus the crucified was this Messiah. To this he added much about the Law, its Curse, its Overthrow; the Cross and Reconciliation and Justification by Faith, Human Depravity and Helplessness, arbitrary Decrees of God under whose wrath we ar born, Predestination to be Saints, our Ruin through Adam's sin, our Recovery by the Lord from heaven; nor did he forget, that when the same Lord should come back to claim his kingdom, then the saints would judge the world. (1 Cor. vi. 2). Therein he retained the primitiv Gospel of Jerusalem, with its literal thrones for the saints. In this mass of new mythology was material for future controversy painfully abundant. Out of it came Augustinianism and what we now call Calvinism. Nevertheless in one cardinal matter Paul was the direct opposit to Calvin; for he taught *Final Universal Salvation.* This is manifest in several places, especially Rom. xi. and 1 Cor. xv. 22—28; a fact which totally changes the moral aspect of much which at first sight appears in his doctrin to be harsh, dreadful and darkening to the character of God. He has indeed sentences and arguments to which, as coming from so hot and hasty a writer, it is reasonable to believe, he would not hav tied himself. He did not know that his Epistles would be turned into a new Sacred Letter for distant ages.

His moral teaching must in every respect be preferred to that which is ascribed to Jesus. It may hardly be too much to say, that all the meaner side of Catholic doctrin comes from Jesus, and all the nobler morals of successiv Reformers from Paul, who had imbibed Greek as well as Hebrew thought. Paul's precepts ar never extravagant,

but commend themselves always to practical good sense, however pure and lofty. He never condemns Wealth, nor suggests that in seeking Perfection we must renounce it; he confines himself to charging rich men to be "rich in "good works." He says, "If I giv all my goods to "feed the poor, and hav not Charity (caritas, *kindliness ?)* "it profiteth me nothing." Compensation in the other world for poverty in this, is nowhere suggested by Paul. He neither blesses poverty, nor approves of religious mendicants; but of such he says: "If any man will not "work, neither let him eat." While preaching, he supported himself by his own labor, living so simply, that he earned the privilege of even supporting the weaker. He severely avows that with Food and Raiment we ought to be content. He warns of the danger of zeal to become rich, yet he never forbids to lay up for old age or for contingent weakness; but even acknowledges that it is seemly for parents to lay up for children (2 Cor. xii. 14). All of his utterances ar those of a disinterested, generous, very warm-hearted man, pure in his aims, and longing for inward perfection, persistent in enduring hardship, ambitious to infuse spiritual life into others, and aware that the privilege of the strong is to support the weak and patiently endure their follies. The duty of renouncing the enjoyment of things lawful, when they tend either to bring us into bondage to them, or to lead another into wrong ways, is presented as natural to one who livs in the new life. His heart seems ever full and gushing with glorious thought and affectionate desire, so as to leave in a reader the conviction: "This is a man who "was sure to inspire deep love and communicate high "enthusiasm,"—an enthusiasm, not for mere notions (of which he had plenty) but for justice, simplicity, purity, benevolence and tender mercy; indeed for all that he calls the Fruits of the Spirit. Having also intense con-

viction, boldness of assertion and unflinching bravery, he united all the moral elements needed in the apostle of a new religion. His extant Epistles ar a precious and beautiful treasure of Christian morality.

He knew that he was incapable of fascinating minds which demanded evidence before they could believe. Of those gathered into the church by him, very few were strong in intellect. Many were illiterate or slaves, others were highly emotional and credulous; some had a tinge of Oriental philosophy; many were allured by the promise of a heavenly Deliverer from oppression; some were attracted by the equality and fraternity of the church; perhaps most of all by admiration of the pure morals which were preached. But while writing and talking urgently concerning Faith, Paul does not discern the great ambiguity of this word, which in Greek, as in English, means (1) fidelity, (2) trust, (3) belief in a proposition. In the two first senses it may be a moral virtue, testing human character: in the third sense it cannot be a virtue: to believe when the particular proposition has no proof, may rather be called a vice. Through entire want of scientific culture, he (like Jesus) mistook Credulity for Faith, and wood, hay, stubble, for gold and silver. But his moral precepts ar gold that endures the fire.

Immoralities into which heathen converts relapsed, were a form of misery to Paul which we all should expect: but he encountered them also from *perverse opinion*, as in those who, having thrown off ceremonialism by the argument that external things cannot defile the spirit, deduced that no sexual act can be sin. He was further distressed to find some members at Corinth who denied human resurrection. We know that Paul's church at Thessalonica grieved over those who died before Christ's return, as though they hereby lost participation

in his earthly rule. No resurrection of individuals entered into the scene of Paradise as presented by the Hebrew prophets. Paul teaches the Thessalonicans, and argues with the Corinthians. Perhaps the latter identified Resurrection with Regeneration, as in Eph. v. 14 and Matt. xix. 28, thence inferring (2 Tim. ii. 18) that "the "Resurrection is past already." Paul in his reply to the Corinthians lets us know his theory, that the kingdom of Christ is to hav a limit of time during which Death is to continue and (since with him Death implies Sin) more or less of Sin. But when *all enemies* (of which Sin is the typical name) hav been destroyed, Death also shall finally vanish. Then no longer will there be need of Rule. The Son of God will become subject to his Father and deliver up the kingdom.

This full and far-reaching anticipation was apparently worked out of a prophetical verse: "Messiah shall rule, "until God has put all enemies under his feet." If this comes from Psalm cx. 1 (as we may suspect) it is a new illustration how doctrin was generated in those days.

The Pauline churches were generally found in places where Greek was understood; in Syria, in Asia Minor or in Greece itself. We do not know that he understood Latin, or any language but Greek and Hebrew. He desired to visit Rome. At last, coming into danger from a tumult in Jerusalem, he used his privilege as a Roman citizen to appeal to Cæsar, and was carried to Rome as a prisoner. Hitherto he had known Roman magistrates as protectors, and fancied that while Christians acted aright, they would hav nothing to fear from Roman power. Hebrew Patriotism he had entirely cast off with zeal for Mosaism. But he lived to learn, how violent, pitiless and unjust was Roman rule. All Christian tradition holds that he was beheaded in Nero's atrocious massacre of Christians, A.D. 64.

A year or two earlier, James had been stoned to death in Jerusalem, on what pretence we do not know. Josephus givs details, as follows, The Roman prefect Festus was dead: his successor was on the road. The high-priest Ananos was one of the Sadducees, a sect rigidly maintaining the old law in its worst severity. He seized his opportunity, while no Roman officer was at hand to restrain him, convoked a Great Council, brought James and others before it as transgressors of the law, and carried against them a Verdict that commanded stoning them to death, which was actually inflicted. But the sentence caused great indignation in Jerusalem. So formidable a protest was made against Ananos to the new Roman prefect and to King Herod Agrippa the Second, that the high-priest was deposed for the deed. By what pleas he prevailed on the Council, no hint is given; but the punishment suggests that he imputed Hero Worship.--We may here note that the Christian Bishops of a later century were sure to dislike the Epistle of James, as testifying his wide difference from their mythology, and tried to discountenance it. But had it not been genuine, had it been a later fabrication, it never could hav gained any acceptance.

James and Paul were both true Jews in glorifying Abraham's readiness to sacrifice his son on a supposed divine command. The respect which to the present day this monstrous fable receives, warns us how little depth there still is in religious thought. A voice from heaven which urges us to an immorality ought rather to be ascribed to a Demon than to God. Paul and James would both hav seen this, if the story had been concerning a contemporary: but being told concerning an ancient patriarch, it passed without criticism. *Datur hæc venia antiquitati.* James also believes in the validity

of prayer for external phenomena, such as Rain and Disease; and the Christian Church to this day upholds the doctrin.

CHAPTER XI.

CLOSE OF THE APOSTOLIC ERA.

When Paul and James had been removed, the chief pillars of the Church may be recounted as Apollos, John son of Zebedee, and Simon called Peter.

Apollos was a Jew of Alexandria, who had received superior literary culture, suggestiv of Greek rhetoric. He may hav been baptized by John himself, whose disciple he regarded himself to be; and we find in the Acts of the Apostles that by reason of the close likeness of John's disciples to those of Jesus, Apollos and others passed as Christian. They were easily converted to Paul's gospel; and before long Apollos must hav become very eminent as a Christian teacher among the Gentiles, with some originality in his doctrin. For Paul (in 1st Epistle to Corinth) represents different Christians as saying, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Peter. It was cleverly conjectured by Martin Luther, that Apollos is the author of the anonymous Epistle to the Hebrews, which cannot be Paul's, as the Greek style at once proves; though the Anglican translation (even the Recent Version) most improperly advertises it as Paul's. The Greek is far superior to that of Paul, the eloquence more polished and delicate, less fervid. The argumentation is less harsh and abrupt, though it has the fanciful subtlety to be expected from any Christian Rabbi. To no one can the Epistle be so plausibly ascribed as to

Apollos. After the death of Paul, Timotheus (Paul's younger friend) might reasonably attach himself to Apollos.

The chief novelty in this Epistle consists in representing Jesus as *High-Priest* of the Church, and *Intercessor* with God. Thus he becomes at once *Priest and Victim, offering himself* without spot to God. He rests his doctrin on the 110th Psalm, "Thou art a Priest for ever, after "the Order of Melchisedek." To many of us it is clear that that Psalm was composed by a priest, seer, or musician in honor of some Jewish king, possibly of David himself. Melchisedek was a king and priest. To say that David was a king after the Order of Melchisedek, was a poetical form of ascribing to him a right of sacrifice; and we know that David did sacrifice at the altar of Araunah the Jebusite. But in this Epistle the Psalm is assumed to be a glorification of Messiah (as probably Paul esteemed it) whence further a discussion concerning the priest-king Melchisedek. The writer's power of making much out of little is quite equal to Paul's, but perhaps this is only Rabbinical. Melchisedek in Genesis is brought-in abruptly, and nothing is said concerning his parentage, nor his birth and death. Out of these *omissions*, the writer grandiloquently raises a mighty fabric, calling him "Without father, without "mother, without descent, having neither beginning of "days nor end of life, but being made like unto the Son "of God, abideth a priest continually." On such a swollen bladder he would build a solid religion! What better illustration could we need of a "Castle in the Air" than this? His rhetoric culminates in his register of Faith, after giving a most unsatisfactory definition (if definition is intended), "Faith is the substance of things "hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Then follows a long list of ancient worthies, among whom so

many deserve sympathy and veneration, that to protest against special names is painful. Still, it is necessary to point at one monstrous assumption, contrary to the whole tenor of Hebrew literature,—that the patriarchs looked forward "to a better country, that is, a heavenly;" besides his fantasy that Moses in Egypt "endured the "reproach of Christ."

In the exaltation of Christ, as God's agent in creation, and therefor his first-begotten, also as the "off-shining" (or reflection?) of God's glory, he agrees with Paul; yet steps beyond him in saying that Jesus is the same Yesterday, To-day and For Ever, which adds to him one more attribute of Godhead, Immutability. Yet he calls "God the Judge of all," while with Paul God Judges men by Jesus. His moral exhortations ar worthy of Paul. The "*blood* of sprinkling" is his phrase, seemingly by allusion to the process for saving the first-born in Egypt from the destroying angel. This blood (he says) is "to *cleanse the conscience* from *dead* works to serve the "*living* God;" rhetorically elegant, morally very obscure. He informs us that "Christ *through the Eternal Spirit* "offered himself without spot to God,"—a new glorification of his ghastly death.

Apparently, with or without Paul, the cross was destined to a poetical glorification. Christians in the retrospect could not bear to think of their Lord's death as *simply* a cruel murder, as it is regarded in the opening of the "Acts." They felt bound to find out some divine purpose in it, some reason for saying that he had not "died in vain." This writer, who is still fuller than Paul of Hebrew sacerdotalism Rabbinically Christianized, signalizes the following curious analogy. "The bodies "of those beasts were burned *without the camp;* wherefor "Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his "own blood, suffered *without the gate.*" How deplorable

a use of a fine intellect! *Sanitary* reasons obviously dictated where the bodies of the beasts should be burned; therefor (forsooth!) Jesus was crucified outside the *gate*. Want of good sense is too manifest. He also teaches us that in or "by the blood of the everlasting covenant" God raised Jesus from the dead, xiii. 20; quite a new covenant (it seems) here revealed, between God and Christ. But why in the blood? because covenants were confirmed *among men* by killing something! ix. 18. On this word *covenant* (Διαθήκη) he sadly blunders. In Greek it means also Last Will or Testament. He has (unawares to himself) in ix. 15—20 drawn up an argument in which this word vacillates between these two very diverse senses: whence hopeless nonsense is detected by an attempt at translation.

But on the whole we cannot wonder that this Epistle attained high honor and loyal acceptance with the Christian Church. Being in many respects like Paul and worthy of Paul, it was supposed to be Paul's. The date cannot be fixed. It has no historical allusion, either to the persecution by Nero or to the coming troubles of Jerusalem. If written in Paul's life, in alluding to Timothy one might expect allusion to Paul. This is not decisiv, yet may seem to turn the scale in favor of believing that it was written after Paul's death.

Nero's persecution of the Christians in Rome is dated A.D. 64. It was a very critical time for the Church, which hitherto, both in Palestine and among the Gentiles, had striven to avoid all offence to the Roman authorities. The belief that the Lord from heaven would quickly supersede all earthly rule, made it easier to them, than to the mass of the Jews, to endure Roman supremacy; nay, to many Roman rule may hav seemed more tolerable than the power of Sadducees. To converted Gentiles an idolatrous power in Italy was no

worse, than if it had been in Alexandria or Babylon, Antioch or Sardis. Paul, as a Roman citizen, had lent all his influence to inculcate loyal submission to Rome: Peter, still later, followed in his track. But events were too stormy and overpowering. The temperament and judgment of the Church concerning Roman rule was changed violently, inevitably,—by cruelty which could not hav been pre-imagined.

This change is first indicated to us in the book which has for title "The Apocalypse (or Revelation) of Jesus "Christ." The author's name is given as John. He writes, as if with authority, to the Seven Churches of Asia. Internal evidence proves that the book was penned not long after the death of Nero, and before the destruction of Jerusalem. All Christian antiquity ascribes to John the son of Zebedee a long life. During his life it was hardly possible for any one to write as personating him. The Greek is the worst of all in the New Testament, and is that of a Hebrew. Absolutely nothing in the book exists to throw doubt on its being the genuine work of the son of Zebedee; and Justin Martyr, the earliest Christian writer who names it, ascribes it distinctly to the *Apostle* John. This apostle was one of the three who according to Paul, were accounted Pillars of the Church. Of any superiority in Peter, Paul was evidently quite ignorant. That must hav been a later fancy, equally that John was peculiarly beloved.

Innocent Englishmen seldom ar able to imagin what Roman "persecution" meant. We know that Romish legend is apt to exaggerate, and a vague distrust is often felt, when the horrors of old days ar alluded to. It therefor is not amiss to go into some detail as to the intense hardheartedness of Roman rule, which is often trumpeted as mild and tolerant, sagacious and civilizing.

There can be no just suspicion that the cruelties of that persecution were less than the tale. Will any one say, Perhaps hatred of the Emperor Nero, who commanded it, led the historians to exaggerate? But the very eminent historian Tacitus, who narrates hideous details, while confessing the Christians innocent of the crime imputed, *viz.*, the burning of Rome, tells all without pity, rather with ferocious exultation, slandering Christians as *per flagitia invisos*, "hateful for profligacies," "convicted of the crime of hating the human race." This philosophic and typical Roman proceeds, "Their "punishments were made a sport: some were covered "by skins of beasts, to make dogs mangle them to death: "others were crucified; others again, wrapped up in "cloths covered with pitch and brimstone, were burnt "in the night to serve as torches. For this spectacle "Nero opened his own gardens. Hence arose pity for a "set of men, *guilty though they were* and *deserving of the* "*most extreme punishments;* yet they now seemed to be "sacrificed, not for the public good, but for the in-"human pleasure of one man." By their "guilt," the historian means *guilt of opinion*, guilt of religion, not guilt of deed: of this he acquits them. Yet he thinks pity for them quite misplaced. When such a writer could hold such sentiments, incredulity seems vain. The horrors ar not narrated by a Christian priest, but by the highest genius then living in Rome, who tells events which occurred in his father's life-time.—Suetonius in few words is equally slanderous and unpitying. Trajan and Pliny, without knowing what Christianity is, assume as an Axiom that it is deadly guilt.

No wonder that Paul's roseate view of Roman power became untenable to Christian hearts. Roman rule had previously seemed as good or as bad as other Pagan rule. To those who learned the facts, it now glared

forth signally as the guilty and deadly foe "of God and his Christ." Christians, before long, painted it to themselves in the same lurid colors as did the bitterest Jewish insurgent. In the Apocalypse of John the Roman Empire is set forth as a fierce Beast: the city Rome is drunk with the blood of the saints. In one and only one chapter of this singular book (ch. xvii.) is an authoritativ *interpretation* added, which the Christian historian Neander has lucidly explained, nor is the explanation open to any reasonable doubt. The chapter sets forth that the seven heads of the beast represent kings, of whom five ar fallen, one still exists, a seventh is yet to come. We must count them: 1, Augustus Cæsar; 2, Tiberius; 3, Caligula; 4, Claudius; 5, Nero: for Caius Julius was known only as one out of several successful combatants in civil war. The Monarchy was recognized in the Eastern provinces only after Antony was defeated by Octavianus B.C. 30.—Nero is the head which received a deadly wound: yet "this deadly "wound was *healed.*" This is explained by the fact that for some twenty years after the death of Nero the Eastern provinces did not believe in his death, but supposed that he had escaped into Parthia. Hence two false Neros attained a great and dangerous following. Nero is denoted also by the 8th head, which *is to be* one of the seven. Who ar intended by the 6th and 7th must remain uncertain, since tidings concerning Galba, Otho and Vitellius came thick and confusing in that year of civil war. The burning down of the temple of Jupiter in Rome by the contending armies is apparently alluded to in ch. xvii. 16, which givs close limits of time for the composition of this book. Tacitus says that in that year the Roman Empire nearly came to an end. —We thus readily understand the mental excitement under which "the Apocalypse" was written, and the

vehemence with which in the opening and in the close it avows that the events prophesied ar *about to be* accomplished *speedily*. Not merely the impending fall of the Empire was declared, but the final triumph in which the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of God and his Christ.

Our Gospels did not yet exist. The dreadful persecution under Nero (which was not wholly confined to Rome) left open the possibility of a rumour that Jesus had foreseen and predicted such sufferings for his faithful disciples: though we see, that if he did not plan or imagin a Gentile church, it is scarcely credible that he foretold these events. After forty or fifty years, in the midst of the mental strain which the imperial violence laid on the Christians, no one need wonder at the rise of numerous unhistorical traditions, which in time would be chronicled as truth. The predictions concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple (as observed above), *cannot* hav proceeded from the mouth of Jesus: consequently there is none but the feeblest reason for attributing to him a foresight that his disciples would suffer extreme persecution.

In the phraseology of the Apocalypse a novelty appears in the use of the word Lamb for Christ: as "God and the Lamb;" "the Lamb that was slain;" "the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne;" and in a very startling metaphor: "they hav *washed** their robes "and made them *white* in the *blood* of the Lamb." Paul set the example of comparing Christ to the *Paschal* Lamb. This lamb in the Hebrew law was not a sacrifice on the altar, but a food in each house. Its blood was (in Exodus) sprinkled on every Israelite doorpost that

* In Rev. i. 5, the Sinaitic version for "washed" has "loosed, freed, "liberated," by reading simple *υ* for *ου*.

the inmates might be spared by the angel sent to destroy the Egyptians. That is why Paul said: "Christ our "Passover is *slaughtered* for us." But John's use of the Lamb may be borrowed from Isaiah liii., "He is brought "as a lamb to the slaughter."

Another novelty of greater importance is found in its entitling Jesus in one passage only (Rev. xix. 13) the *Word* of God. This is the beginning of *sublimating* him into an abstract *principle*, and dealing with Christianity as Philo had dealt with Judaism. The early Christian might now claim a Trinity in a verse of the Hebrew Psalms: "By the *Word* of Jehovah were the heavens "made, and all the host of them by the *Breath* (Spirit) "of his mouth." In Paul, the Lord Jesus is a solid person, no less separate from God, the Source of being, than is every individual man. So indeed is the Lamb of the Apocalypse: but as soon as the Son of God is entitled the *Word* of God, (especially since the same Greek term means Word and Reason) a foundation is laid for endless fantasy and endless controversy.

John in the Apocalypse closely follows Paul's exaltation of Christ. Paul calls him the *first-born of all creation* (Coloss. i. 15), so in Rev. iii. 14, he is *the beginning of the creation of God.* Each shows that *Arius* went the full length of Apostolic orthodoxy, and that Athanasius was an innovator. John goes on to call Jesus the King of kings and Lord of lords, "the first and the "last," who has the keys of Hades and of Death.— Whatever may be said by calm critics as to the want of sobriety in this book, it has a strange magnificence and purity of its own, and an admirable moral depth. In these dreadful times it must hav had an overpowering fascination to the suffering Christian.

Some phenomena in it ar hard to explain. (1) Is he literally Judaical, when he represents twelve thousand

saints to be sealed from each of the twelve tribes of Israel? or if not, what can the statement mean? (2) When he makes out twelve tribes by omitting Dan, and numbering Manasseh and Joseph (*i. e.* Ephraim) as *two*, does he merely follow the reckoning already popular? The tribe of Dan was never able to conquer its allotted territory: a portion of it conquered by cruel attack a single town, in the farthest north of "the Holy Land:" but this perhaps was *never* accounted one of the twelve.— (3) Can any but a literal sense be put on his phrase: "These ar they which ar not defiled with women: for "they ar virgins," (Rev. xiv. 4). One can understand that in those terrible days such Christians as followed Paul in refraining from marriage, lest tenderness to wife and children lessen their power of endurance and faithfulness, were considered pre-eminent saints: but to brand marriage as "defilement" is simply dreadful, and one is unwilling to impute this to the apostle John. Whatever he *meant*, it would seem that this text had a very fatal effect on all the old historical churches. From a different side it buttressed Paul's pernicious doctrin that God does not grant the gift of chastity to men in general; whence a detestable tenet, current in modern false science for defence of male unchastity, gains support among Christian dignitaries.

Not only is the Roman Empire denounced in the Apocalypse as the deadly enemy of God and his saints (in marked contrast to Paul's notion and hope), but much stress is laid on the wickedness of worshipping the Beast (*i.e.* the Empire) and *his image*. There can be no reasonable doubt that this meant the image of Cæsar. A monstrous and abominable tyranny had crept in, which Augustus or Tiberius Cæsar would hav abhorred,—that of demanding, as a test of loyalty, to worship the Emperor's image. We see in the Apocalypse the terrible prominence which this had obtained.

This book became classical, as promising a First and Second Resurrection, and between them a Thousand Years' reign on Earth of Jesus and his Saints. That is why it was disparaged when Christians became ashamed of that expectation. It also, more than any other Christian book, undertakes to depict to the imagination the delights of a Christian heaven. The effort at spirituality is plausible, but a cessation of toil, pain and sorrow (as in Hebraic death) is the only solid idea in it. In continued life the total absence of pain and want is fatal to the idea of progressiv virtue. There is absolutely nothing to be *done*. No self-sacrifice is possible. No motiv for any exertion is imaginable, except to increase *knowledge* and *science;* so, after all, nothing beyond a Ciceronian heaven is propounded to us. Personal vision of "the Lamb" is *in itself* not more satisfying than was personal vision of the living Jesus.

Concerning this John we may remark that when Paul wrote to the Galatians, John apparently was still resident in Jerusalem; but afterwards he must hav had long familiarity with the seven churches of Asia to whom he inscribed the book of Apocalypse. Among them he learned to deviate widely from the primitiv creed of Jerusalem, as we see it in James's Epistle. Nevertheless it is not probable that he ever formally sanctioned Paul; for he pointedly upholds only twelve apostles, whereas if Paul's apostleship were admitted, there were thirteen. He also puts into the mouth of Jesus severe words against those who say they ar apostles, and ar not: which seems to strike at Paul.

A few words ar needed concerning Simon, called Cephas in Hebrew, Petros in Greek. No reason appears for doubt, that Jesus gave to Simon the surname Rock, because of his forwardness in avowing that Jesus was the Messiah. Paul never calls him Simon; James in the

"Acts" is made to call him Simeon. In his first and genuine Epistle, he calls himself Petros. The second Epistle, which even by Augustus Neander is judged spurious, opens by the name Simon Petros. The word Simon is Greek, meaning *snubnosed.* In Galilee this may hav been of Greek origin: but Simeon is clearly Hebrew. Was then the spelling Simon the mistake of men familiar with Greek?

Peter's character as depicted in the Gospels is that of generous ardour unsupported by moral tenacity. Paul also in writing to the Galatians represents him as aiming at the impossible task of pleasing both sides; the error of one amiable, but not strong. He had moved on quite readily in admitting Gentiles into the Church. He could not go along with Paul's vehemence at Antioch, and encountered Paul's severe rebuke; yet he certainly had no desire to impose on Gentiles the ceremonial law. German critics hav disputed the authenticity of even Peter's first Epistle, on the ground (solely, I believe,) of its being too like Paul's doctrin. It however is Paul without Pauline argumentation or Pauline subtleties. It is far more popular and less scholastic than is Paul normally, and seems to come from a tender and sweet nature which would both forgiv Paul's rudeness and be willing to learn of him.

No trace of Rabbinical argument appears in it, though it has what may be thought a Pharisaic doctrin concerning Spirits in Prison (rebel angels?) to whom Christ was supposed to preach the Gospel (iii. 19) by going down into Hades or Gehenna. These ar the angels (or sons of God) in Gen. vi. who through love of women (Jude 6 and 7) kept not their first estate. A peculiar obscurity is in iii. 6, where he speaks of the Gospel as preached to *the dead*, which whether literal or figurativ is very perplexing. His most Pauline trait is the com-

parison of Baptism to Noah's ark, but the Baptism of which he speaks is not the mere external rite, but the confession of a sincere heart.

It may be objected that nothing in this Epistle denotes the writer ever to have seen and listened to Jesus. But the objection assumes that in those days the business of an apostle was to play the part of an "evangelist," making much of the deeds and words of the living Jesus. It assumes that the practical morality taught by Jesus was more valuable than that of Paul and Peter. Rather, these apostles believed that they had to teach truths and hopes concerning the *risen* Jesus which he, while alive, did not teach, and that change of circumstances made change of moral exhortation suitable. The *perfect virtue* of Jesus himself could not be attested by an apostle as though eye or ear were a competent judge; so transcendent a quality could only be inferred by the *prophecies* concerning Messiah.

The last words of this remarkably beautiful and edifying Epistle send a salutation from the Church in *Babylon*. No valid reason appears for doubting that he wrote from the historical city of Babylon. The tone of iv. 17 denotes that he saw the destruction of Jerusalem under Vespasian and Titus to impend. He may hav written A.D. 69. In iv. 12 his expectation of the fiery trial (to all Jewish Christians—for it is to these that he writes) attests that the fierce enmity of the Roman Government to Christians was no secret to him. Yet he perseveres in Paul's theory concerning governors (ii. 14) and is most earnest that Christian Jews shall giv no symptom of disloyalty. His modesty in addressing Elders as himself an Elder, and exhorting them not to be lords over God's heritage, is in very pleasing contrast to that of bishops in the following centuries. Whether Peter ever set foot in Italy, is historically quite doubtful.

No well attested fact denotes that he ever held or desired any supremacy in the Church, Jewish or Gentile. The four Gospels accuse him of having three times denied Christ with vehement oaths: but the lead which in Acts i. 15 is conceded to him ungrudgingly, makes this story as improbable as ar the details concerning the motivs of Judas.

The reasons for rejecting as spurious the second Epistle called Peter's, cannot here be fully treated. It is enough to say, that the second chapter is judged to be a mere importation of Jude's Epistle, and Jude writes, looking back to the apostles as an earlier generation: also the third chapter is written after much disappointment had been felt that Christ's second coming was delayed. The excuse for this, that "with the Lord a thousand years "ar as one day" is fatal to all truth, making God a wilful deceiver of men. Such doctrin is self-confuting.

CHAPTER XII.

DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM AND ITS EFFECT ON CHRISTIANITY.

Unhappily it was not the Romans alone who hated the Jews. No conquering empire has yet made itself beloved, except that of the Incas in Peru, who (according to Spanish accounts) conquered by that blessed Christian rule, which bids us show greatness by becoming servant of the weaker. To imperial kindness the barbarian heart pays grateful allegiance, as surely as do horses and dogs. But Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes and Persians, Macedonians and Romans, following the doctrin that

Might makes right, and, *Woe to the conquered!* were hated by those whom they trod down. It is not wonderful, that so too were the Jews during their short term of imperialism. The Hebrew annals frankly inform us how very far was their pious king David from gentleness towards Edom, Ammon and even Moab; how light-handed also his plundering of Syrian towns. All this comes as it were naturally to one who has proved superior in war.

The tale was repeated by the Jewish power after the marvellous Maccabean successes. These exalted the Jewish spirit everywhere and gave honor to the Jewish name. The successiv kings of Egypt looked on Jews with respect, and (in modern phraseology) admitted them to diplomatic equality. Maccabean princes ruled in Sheba. A million Jews dwelt in Alexandria with nativ autonomy under the Ptolemies. The Romans were glad to make the Jewish power their ally. The sacrosanct head of the Jews, already a Priest-King in fact, dealt with a very high hand towards foreigners, grudging municipal local freedom even to nativ towns, in order to centralize power in Jerusalem. Syrian towns, of which many were conquered, ar not likely to hav had much freedom left to them, though their language was that of Jerusalem. All that is reported of them implies, that at every time they felt themselves to be under a foreign yoke. Jewish dealing with Edomite towns was severer still; for after conquest, circumcision and the whole of the Mosaic ritual was violently imposed. Yet here it may seem that the violence was successful; for, as the descendants of Saxons who had been driven to baptism by the spear of Charlemagne, and Hungarians forcibly converted by St. Stephen, came to pride themselves on their Christianity, so (in two generations perhaps) were these Edomites proud of their Judaism,

and practically were incorporated into Israel. The fierce demolition of Samaria by the high-priest Hyrcanus was mentioned above. Jerusalem was not virtuous enough for her own successes and temporary power. When Rome came down in might on Syria, it may well be believed that from the evil reports of the Syrians, many of whom avowed disaffection to Jewish rule, the Romans quickly imbibed strong aversion to the Jewish character. Moreover, it is every way credible, that the Jews under their new regimen were more offensiv to their neighbours than under their former royalty. David, however acceptable his piety to the strict worshippers of Jehovah, and however unbridled his personal elation, was not king over a whole nation possessed by ceremonial zeal. His people were only too prone to adopt the superstitions of their neighbours, as indeed were many of the kings who succeeded him. But in the later period, when all the nation had become devoted to the law of Moses, and had seemed to experience that Jehovah indeed *fought* for them; then, to avoid religious arrogance was hardly possible. They had rejected marriage with Gentiles as a defilement and a breach of sacred law. To eat at a common table involved ceremonial uncleanness. On a smaller scale, like causes separate Turks from their Christian subjects, and Englishmen in India from nativs. To be conquered and governed by foreigners is a grievous sore; but to be insulted by the perpetual suggestion: "We domineer, because we ar pure, and you ar defiled," drops poison into the wound. It can scarcely be doubted, that the ordinary insolence of conquerors was inflamed by ecclesiastical pride. The Hebrew scriptures fanned the flame. Every Israelite remembered such texts as: "God shall subdue the nations under us, and the peoples "under our feet! Moab is my washpot; over Edom will "I cast my shoe," &c. Texts ar too numerous here to

quote; indeed that glorious (later) Isaiah abounds with ampler and varied chants of triumph. Earthly dominion, earthly wealth and splendor, earthly vassalage of Gentiles, ar announced in words unmistakable. It is childish to pretend that Jerusalem and Zion do *not* mean the cities so called, but mean miscellaneous saints who profess a different and higher religion than that of Isaiah. Most certainly no such idea could enter the Hebrew nation, even if a few eccentric Rabbis, with Paul, imagined it. But Christians, instead of confessing that these beautiful prophecies were *patriotic* error and an unhappy source of delusion, continue to insist that they ar divine, scold at the Jews for accepting their obvious and only sense, and twist the words to their own glory.*

The language of Jerusalem hardly differed from that of the Syrians: we call both at that time Syriac. The Asmonean princes conquered much or all of Hollow Syria, — the lofty plain between Libanus and Anti-Libanus. Some towns were alternately conquered and lost. Many Syrian towns had Jewish residents in time of peace: but probably all Syrian towns preferred Syrian to Jewish rule; and at least at first, preferred Roman masters to Jews. The city of Cæsarea approached the ancient Tyrian frontier. It had been built up into splendor by Herod the Great, and named in honor of Augustus Cæsar. It contained a temple adorned with statues in Greek style, which seemed to alienate it from Judæa. It had a Jewish synagogue; but the Syrian residents, under the patronage of Herod and his successors, may hav been more numerous than the Jews. In this city a fatal flame was first lighted (if we can

* The amiable and learned Crévier says that the Jews, when they made insurrection against Trajan, had only to complain of "the heavy yoke laid "upon them contrary *in their opinion (!)* to the express promises and predic- "tions of the prophets."

believe the details in Josephus) by the very wicked machinations of the Roman prefect Florus.

Every Roman officer expected to return home rich enough to liv in high state. Man differed from man in shamelessness and cruelty, but very few indeed made justice or humanity paramount. Florus (according to our historian) was so extreme in his odious malversations, that accusation against him in Rome was likely to be fatal, unless he could paralyze his accusers by involving them in imputation as insurgents. His policy therefor was, to get up an insurrection, and earn credit for crushing it. In order to provoke the Jews to resistance, he stirred up a quarrel in Cæsarea; he also himself committed slaughter in Jerusalem. Aware of his policy, the Jews at first tried to curb him by appealing to Cestius Gallus, governor of Syria, who was superior to Florus: but much delay followed. The Jews in all parts, when they heard of massacres in Jerusalem and in Cæsarea, with complicity of the Roman authorities partly clear, partly suspected, were exasperated beyond endurance. Bands of guerilla took arms. A Roman fortress near the Dead Sea was captured with a highly stored arsenal. Violent counsels prevailed in Jerusalem itself, the son of the high-priest regarding the state of things unendurable. Presently wild and frantic auxiliaries came in, led by a son of Judas of Galilee: thus the counsels of the more timid or more prudent (whichever epithet is more proper) were overpowered. Cestius Gallus himself came to mediate *too late*. His conscience seems to hav been on the side of the Jews: perhaps he abhorred the deeds of Florus. Either his moderation, or his inward vacillation, courted attack. The fierce bandits, after defeating him, violated military faith; hereby making it morally impossible for the authorities at Rome not to take up in earnest the war which had

begun by Roman defeat. After this Jewish perfidy,—though it was the deed of wild unmanageable banditti,—no declaration of loyalty from Jerusalem could be listened to. So began the eminently dreadful war against brave fanaticism and patriotic despair.

The historian Crévier thinks the calculation of Josephus credible, that eleven hundred thousand Jews perished in the siege of Jerusalem alone. Another quarter of a million must be added for the war in other parts; besides ninety-seven thousand who were reduced to slavery. This destruction deprived *primitiv Christianity* of its nativ centre and purest traditions, and gave scope for credulous invention in the Gentile Churches. Jewish Christians lost all authority. They were scolded down as unsound in the faith, for not accepting the additions made to their creed from the visions of Paul and John. The remains of the Jerusalem churches after the destruction of Jerusalem, according to the learned Mosheim, fell into two sects, called *Ebionites* and *Nazarenes*.* The former regarded Jesus as born in the ordinary way from Joseph and Mary; and they clung to Mosaism as necessary to salvation, *for Gentiles as well as Jews;*—but we hav this statement only from their enemies. In both points the Nazarenes less offended the Gentiles. They believed Jesus "to hav been born of a Virgin, and to be "*in a certain manner* united to the Divine nature." They did not press Mosaic ceremonies on Gentile Christians; but held them to be obligatory on them-

* The account given of these two sects belongs to the second century after the *further* massacre of the Jews, first in Cyrene, Alexandria, Cyprus and Mesopotamia under Trajan, next in Palestine itself under Hadrian, 65 years later than the destruction of the temple by Titus. In the three years of this last war, says Crévier, 580 thousand Jews perished by the sword. Their leader, Barcoceb, was accepted by them as Messiah.—These two wars were final: Palestine was nearly a wilderness. Babylon became the feeble centre of Jewish learning.

selves as Jews.--The Ebionites were quickly denounced as heretics; the Nazarenes somewhat later. But neither sect by traditional position, numbers, wealth or learning had any controul over the Gentile Church. Thus it became easy to suffocate the primitiv Creed, and the doctrin of Jesus himself, by the new incrustations.

When the second century opened, the doctrin of Paul, Apollos and John son of Zebedee, that "Jesus was the "beginning of the creation of God," was accepted in all the Gentile Churches. Under Trajan we find that the Christians known to Pliny were supposed by him to chant a hymn to Christ *as God* (or as a god). His miraculous birth from a virgin was perhaps already received in all these Churches. The Son of God was understood to be the Mediator through whom alone God can be known and approached. It is not wonderful that words to this effect should be attributed to Jesus himself, though nothing of the sort is in the celebrated Lord's Prayer, which does not suggest to pray *in his name.* In Matthew and in Luke (as we receive the books) there is a passage, evidently from the same source, of a tone strikingly new; namely, Matt. xi. 25—30, and Luke x. 21, 22: "*All things ar delivered to me by my Father;* "*and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither* "*knoweth any man the Father, save the Son; and he to* "*whom the Son will reveal him.*" In the spurious prophecy Matt. xxiv. 36, the *prescience* of the Son is denied, precisely where, if "all things ar delivered unto him," he ought to know *when* to act as well as *what* to do. Thus a growth is discernible in the power attributed to Jesus, after that prophecy was imagined, that is, after the great siege of Jerusalem.

A new Epic was ere long imagined and executed by John the Elder, whom ecclesiastical tradition refers to Ephesus. His style is quite his own, though so like to

the verses just quoted that they might pass as his. If in this day anyone claimed Divine Power either for himself or for another, it would seem rather madness than childishness to believe without any evidence at all. Yet if anyone ask, What evidence *would suffice?* it is impossible to reply, so extreme is our demand. If evidence quite stupendous in amount and unprecedented in quality would be justly required now, less cannot hav been really needed 1800 years ago: nor hav we any adequate proof that the pretension was ever advanced *by* or *for* Jesus *during his life.* It would seem that the Christian books regard as piety to accept such statements as if *self-evident*, or at least, as if the assertion "Jesus of "Nazareth is the Son of God, begotten of his Father "before all worlds," were a proposition of the same rank, and to be approved by the same faculties, as "The "visible Universe is the work of Super Human power."

John the Elder wrote three extant Epistles, to which the Fourth Gospel is so like in style that it is natural to attribute them to the same hand. This Gospel, like many a bold romance, has been accepted as history, and has cast the three first narrativs into the shade, by its specious pretence of spirituality. Undoubtedly the address and prayer of Jesus, by which the writer audaciously supplants the agony in the garden, is singularly majestic and captivating. As with certain writers of history, so here style gains attention and accredits a tale, when there is no ostensible proof and no probability.

Whether any of Justin Martyr's quotations (during the reign of one of the Antonines) came from the fourth Gospel, is hotly debated. Justin does not quote as from a separate book, nor attribute his quotations to the *apostle* John. But he definitly attributes to this apostle the authorship of the Apocalypse,—a book written in a marvellously different Greek style.

From the Apocalypse, this Gospel borrows the title "Word of God" for Jesus in its opening. Neither in it, nor in the Epistles of John do we meet the topic of looking for the return of the Lord from Heaven, which was the cardinal gospel in the first age. A subtle effort is perhaps made to replace it by the promise of "the "Comforter," which is to supply a mystical interpretation of the words: "I will come unto you." All the facts converge to the belief, that this Gospel was written after the most thoughtful members of the Church had abandoned the primitiv expectation of that great event which the Apocalypse solemnly declared to impend.

With this book the Canon of the New Testament may seem to close; yet the Epistle of Jude was perhaps as late, and the second (or spurious) Epistle of Peter must be later than this of Jude.

A survey of near two centuries exhibits a rapid change of fundamental doctrin. First of all, the Gospel, or Good News, is, that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand. This formula belongs both to John the Baptist, and to Jesus with slight changes. After the death of Jesus, the Good News is, that Jesus, who has ascended to Heaven will speedily return in the clouds to reign on the Earth with his Saints. Such was the Gospel common to James and Paul. But Paul added details concerning Jesus, which were not accepted and incorporated in the Gospel of Jerusalem, making "One God and one Lord" a dual object of worship. "God and the Lamb" ar much the same as this. Sixty years later the belief in the return of Christ to reign on earth was dying out through the disappointment of hope. The primitiv gospel vanished; but instead remained, Washing away Sin by the Blood of the Cross, Predestination to Life, and a mysterious tenet concerning "the Son and the "Father." This doctrin of "the Blood" was subversiv

of all that had been taught in Judaism concerning God's free forgivness. Protestants hav now another fundamental condition of saintship,—a belief that "the Bible" is the Word of God.

Such a change of front is truly damaging; but as though this were not enough, *Sacerdotalism* also was set up. The primitiv peculiarity of the doctrin of Jesus is hereby overthrown. With him religion was a personal relation between the individual soul and God; but his degenerate followers hav gone back to the earlier conception of Jews and Pagans that *religion is corporate* and is attained only by becoming a member of a special community, which virtually mediates between the soul and its God. When we see such phenomena we may modify Paul's phrase, and say "ever shifting, and never "advancing towards truth."

What ar the Gates of *Hades* which, according to Jesus, shall never prevail against his Church, is a very obscure matter; but certainly nothing in its history suggests any divine exemption from unlimited error.

CHAPTER XIII.

OUR MODERN PROBLEM.

Christianity is no longer in its cradle. More than eighteen centuries hav passed since the Apostle John wrote these words: "The Revelation of Jesus the "Messiah, which God gave unto him, to show unto his "saints what things must quickly come to pass . . . . "For the crisis is near."—Rev. i. 1—3. Already (the Apostle assures us) it was promulgated in heaven that "the kingdoms of this world ar become the kingdoms of

"our Lord and of his Messiah; for the Lord God "omnipotent reigneth." Again and again it is repeated: "I come quickly;" he comes to accept his crown and to seat his saints on the throne with him. The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!" Let him that heareth say, "Come!" He that testifieth these things saith, "YEA, I COME QUICKLY." The Apostle eagerly responds, "Come, Lord Jesus."

If we had no history of these eighteen centuries, and we formed a picture of them from such prophecies, very false would be our belief concerning the earthly events. We should suppose that the Heavenly King had long since come down with angelic guards, had overthrown the ungodly oppressiv rule of violent men, and had installed his saints at his side, to establish his Rule of Righteousness. Such was the firm expectation of the Apostles. But in the actual history we see not a single trace in this direction. The persecution of "the saints" ever became fiercer for two centuries and a half; and the baptized Rulers who succeeded the Emperor Constantine were collectivly a crew of self-seeking worldly men, not one of them superior to the best of the Pagan Emperors. Neither the dominant Paganism nor the Empire was overthrown by the descent of Messiah on his heavenly white horse (Rev. xix. 11), but by the civil wars of the Imperialists and by the inroad of fierce barbarians; and there followed, not a kingdom of Heaven on Earth, but more than a thousand years of tumult and confusion, of gross ignorance and vile superstition, sanguinary violence on one side establishing Might as Right, priestly assumption on the other teaching prostration of the private conscience and making itself mediator between God and man.

The modern Reformer has sought, naturally and reasonably, to reform by reverting to the *primitiv* doctrin:

but how is the word *primitiv* to be interpreted? Luther and Calvin and the Anglican Reformers thought it an Axiom that the Nicene Creed and indeed even the Creed called (with no right) Athanasian, was to be retained. In fact they barely went back as far as Constantine. The earlier the creed, the simpler and less ample it was found; but side by side with modern Science, modern experience in Literature, modern investigations in History, the demand of Evidence before belief in miracle becomes ever more imperious. Not only is it found that such miracles as the resurrection of the deceased Jesus and the ascension of his body into heaven hav no adequate proof, but even with the more thoughtful and deep-thinking Christians three questions raise grave embarrassment, (1) In what sense can any one reasonably *interpret* the assertion that a man named in history was a Divine person in disguise? (2) What *proof* was offered to the world by the first preachers, that Jesus was superhuman? (3) What evidence can, or could, *ever* suffice to prove that a certain man was an eternal, incomprehensible, omnipresent being?

Any creed which is imbibed with the mother's milk will stand long and widely *without* evidence; because the bulk of mankind ar too busy to think fundamentally. In every nation a decisiv majority clings to the traditional creed. But such has been the reaction against sacerdotal pride and doctrin called orthodox, that wherever priests ar powerless to suppress literature, Christians who exercise unbiassed and reverent thought, largely embrace the modern doctrin called Unitarian, which, while seeking to glorify Jesus as a unique Saint and pre-eminent Teacher of true and undefiled Religion, yet insists that in nature and origin he was purely human and tied down by human conditions. In Calvinistic Switzerland this doctrin has largely triumphed over Calvin; in Huguenot

France the same result appears. In Germany as in England the dignified Protestant clergy ar no longer forward to expound Athanasian doctrin and dilate on the Eternal Generation of the Son or the "Procession" (*i. e.* Emanation) of the Third Person of the Trinity. Is there any reasonable hope that Unitarian Christianity, as set forth by its noblest teachers, can be accepted as a National Creed *anywhere?*

The Anglican clergy hav long wielded against this class of Christians an argument to which (as far as the present writer knows) no reply has been *publicly* attempted. The argument (mildly put) is virtually this: "If Jesus was not essentially more than human, his "deportment (as narrated in the Gospels) was abnormal "in arrogance, and variously indefensible; unexplanatory "to those whom it was his duty to instruct concerning "his claims, repelling to those whom it was his duty "to conciliate, and a very evil example of accepting "supremacy and worship. When Peter is honored by "prostration, Acts x. 26, (or whatever posture is meant "by falling down to worship) he deprecates it by 'stand "'up! for I myself am also a man.' Jesus calls himself "meek and lowly; but if he was a man, subject to all "our limitations, his very different demeanor as narrated "in the Gospels shows him to hav been morally *greatly* "*inferior* to numbers of his professed disciples."

To this objection one reply is made privately;—never in its full strength to the public. It runs thus: "The "Gospels ar full of erroneous details, often very unjust "and damaging to the memory of Jesus. Our business "is to cast these out *by a higher criticism*, assured that "so pre-eminent a moral genius cannot hav been guilty "of the grave improprieties attributed to him in the "Gospels. We do not *assume* his pre-eminent goodness "without proof, and then eject as false whatever would

"confute us; nor do we *accept* his superhuman excellence "on the testimony of Paul, who did not know or wish "to know the fleshly Messiah; nor yet of Peter who "argues it out as if from prophecy; but we *infer* it from "the saintliness of unnumbered Christians who *must* hav "imbibed it by spiritual transmission from the personal "Jesus."

According to this view, in the present volume far too much reliance has been placed on the testimony of the three Gospels, although my effort has been to lay no stress, and hold no strong belief, except where the tale and its coloring, if false, were very unlikely to hav been invented or transmitted by Christian devotees. I hav freely avowed the difficulty of basing accurate history on these narrativs. But when they ar vaguely disowned as untrustworthy, and no clue is given us (such as I hav tried to use) in discriminating *some* parts as reasonably credible,—then to found a biography on the history of an after-church is like building on chaos:—a task which in no like case has ever yet attained general approval of historians. Christianity as a system of *spiritual morals*, may, just as other morals, be accepted and retained without any knowledge or belief concerning its historical origin; nor will many expect spiritual gain from re-making a man's lost image by subtle inductions or deductions, unintelligible to "babes and sucklings," however convincing to transcendental philosophers. The case of Jesus is then like that of Zoroaster and Sakya Muni, perhaps that of Moses and Mohammed. The loom and the plough, the winnowing shovel, the oar, the sail, and the horse's bit do good service, though we know not who originated them. Much the same is it with Moral and Spiritual doctrin. To hold the truth concerns us much; to know who first promulgated it, very little. Moreover we know for certain that nearly

all the utterances of Jesus had been anticipated by numerous teachers before his birth. Nay, I must except the fundamental tenet of his own Messiahship: but as I learn, the foremost Unitarian doctrin now denies that he claimed to be the Messiah foretold by the Hebrew prophets: that is now maintained to hav been a damaging error diffused by the enthusiasm or (must we rather say?) fanaticism of James and the other apostles on the one part, and of their doubtful ally Paul on the other.

In this survey of opinion one broad fact seems to emerge; that unless we can receive the tradition current in one or other of the great national churches which deifies Jesus, we hav to reconstruct our religion, so far as the personal history of Jesus is concerned, on a totally new basis, which rejects as unhistorical, delusiv and disparaging the documents hitherto called sacred. Nor only so; but in every case one who thinks wisely has also largely to supplement and even modify Christian morals, for several decisiv reasons. First, because eighteen centuries of social and civil experience hav vastly affected men's thoughts concerning cardinal matters on which Morals ought to dogmatize,—such as the relation of master to slave, of parent to child, of man to woman, of magistrate to private person, or to speak more definitly, the relation of him who claims and holds rule by force of weapons and those who ar made or kept subjects ("subditi") against their will by superior force; also concerning the moral duties of king and people when the legitimacy of their relation is conceded. Egyptian, Persian, Greek, Roman, Hebrew, Christian moralists in common applaud *Justice;* but this grand and cardinal virtue in its application and interpretation varies notably with the width of experience and knowledge in the interpreter. Secondly, because the helpless position of the ancient Christians under dominant and

raw Pagan Imperialism was enormously different from that which modern Christians hold under royalty or republicanism, which, however Pagan in fact, is Christian in profession; especially where the national institutions giv safety to free thought and defined political power to private persons. Thirdly, and chiefly, because it is a plain fact, deniable only by those who read their sacred documents "with a veil over their hearts," that the first Christian teachers, whose saintly aims we revere, whose virtuous constancy we applaud, whose moral enthusiasm is kindling and truly edifying, whose teaching is to this day highly profitable, when legitimately used; —nevertheless, held the erroneous, baseless, fully and long refuted idea, that Messiah was shortly to be displayed as King himself, with his risen saints and martyrs as his pre-eminent ministers of Political power, in place of the deposed tyranny which was hitherto trampling down the earth.

This error has had a very pernicious effect, and to this day acts mischievously. Every apostle, while holding it, necessarily thought it waste effort in a Christian to improve institutions or culture, when their future would hav no continuous relation with the present,—a world whose material and connexions could not be transmitted to future generations,—a world whose wickedness the Most High was resolved no longer to endure, but by the descent of his Son from heaven to burn up its surface and cast down its thrones. They could not exhort Christians to any political duties, but that of *submission* to violent power and *abstinence* from wrong, *i.e.*, refusal to become partners and tools of other men's sins. The precepts which in their day were dictated by good sense ar so little suited to our day, that Bible Christians ar apt to go wrong, in exact proportion as they submit their minds to the dictation of special texts. Large souls and

strong minds seize on the noble and broad generalities of apostolic teaching; but the pettier minds and hearts cling to what Paul called "the letter that killeth." Among the most sincere Biblical Christians the idea is prevalent (grounded on submission to authority accounted divine) that to "improve this world" is no work for Christians; that their sole task is to save and cultivate their own souls first, and that of their neighbours or of the heathen, if they can; to abound in works of mercy and kindliness, no doubt; but only as a physician deals with disease. His business is to heal after sickness has been induced; *not* to prevent disease by removing its causes: just so, the prevailing idea with the Biblist is, that a Christian ought indeed to show pity to the wretched or vicious, but not to attempt the wild and impossible idea of tearing up the roots which mainly gender wretchedness and vice, especially unjust and unwise national institutions, with which no apostle tried to meddle.* As once the isolation of a hermit or retirement in a convent was mistaken for Religion, so now the cultivation of personal private piety too largely occupies religious thought, superseding our duty to improve the world.

Far and wide there is outcry for a religion free from superstition, and not based on historical error or empty assumption. Our modern task really is to attain such a religion. To avoid historical error, there is one and only one sure way: namely, to avoid History altogether. History is a field of erudition, precisely the matter in which the mass of mankind ("babes and sucklings") ar necessarily weak and very deceivable. If religion is not

* Strange to add,—even the trade of the paid soldier, engaged to kill and ravage at the word of command,—a trade into which no primitiv Christian after conversion could enter,—has received no ecclesiastical check or reproof for more than 1500 years.

to be dictated by the few learned in antiquity to the unlearned many; if we ar ever to attain the state predicted by Hebrew prophets, in which the Spirit of God, diffused in the multitude, shall make each separately to "know the Lord," we must hav a religion of which the bulk of the adult community can judge *fundamentally*, without the aid of ancient learning. What indeed *can* Religion hav to do with History? Religion treats of the relations of Man to God, which ar the same everywhere and at all times. History details special human events on special areas in past time; none of which can possibly affect the relations of the unchangeable God to an unchanged race of his creatures; none of which ar open to the cognizance of the unlearned human millions. Religion dependent on human history is as much a chimæra and a delusion, as astronomy founded on human history.

A positiv condition requisit for a True Religion, is, that it be acceptable to the good sense of all the most cultivated races of men. In old times national minds were separated by barriers insurmountable. Oceanic navigation has thrown these barriers down. Existing national religions divide mankind and propagate enmity: they *must* do so, if they rest on special history: but the times ar ripe for a religion which shall unite us, and forbid the unnatural collision. A proof that the times ar ripe is found in the reception given in China and Japan to Derzhavin's hymn to God. [I here quote a paragraph which I cut out from a newspaper, but hav lost the reference. A translation of the Hymn is in my hands.] "The Hymn to God by a Russian born in 1763 "was translated into Japanese by order of the Emperor, "and is hung up, embroidered with gold, in the temple "of Jeddo. It has been translated also into the Chinese "and Tartar languages, written on a piece of rich silk,

"and suspended in the imperial palace at Pekin." If men would but lay aside bitterness and bigotry, the intellectual state of the world now eminently invites effort in the direction of religious agreement. But alas! the rival pretensions of the Cross and the Crescent ar everywhere big with war and bloodshed. Claims to exclusiv and divine authority ar the fundamental mischief. With the renunciation of (alledged) History as part of Religion all *haughty pretension to Authority* vanishes. What other conditions ar needed for World-wide Religion?

(1.) First of all, be it remembered, what alone makes religion desirable;—it is not for the benefit and honor of God, but for the benefit and ennoblement of Man. A religion is good, only in proportion as it stimulates men to be good. It must be a practical aid to pure morality. Since God has nothing to gain by our devotion, but men hav very much to gain by other men's righteousness, Duty to men ought to take precedence of Duty to God, and what Christians call the Second Commandment is rightfully the First. A good God cannot but regard man's duty to man as far more important than any services of man to God; and what He considers primary and paramount, we ought to make primary and paramount.

John the Elder very nearly alighted on this doctrin, in asking: "If a man love not his brother whom he hath "seen, how shall he love God whom he hath not seen?" Love to God is a chimæra in one who does not yet love virtuous conduct *for its own sake.* The love of God implies the love of perfect goodness.

(2.) Next, we hav to reverse the doctrin of Christianity, or else go back to Judaism, by teaching that the interests of *this* life ar of *primary* importance, whatever after-life may be in store; because, undeniably, this world is given

into our hands *as a trust and a task*, while the future world is not. This life is known to us as fact; the future life (as Paul says) is known only by hope; and no one can suggest any reasonable preparation for a future life but that of performing all known present duties. Therefor the maxim of Lycurgus may be applied: "Sparta has been assigned as thy lot; busy thyself to "adorn this trust." The American sect called Shakers express their notion well: "We ar now in the millennium "(say they) and our business is to beautify and glorify "the earth." In our dialect we need but small change of phrase: "As trustees in our generation, our task is *to "improve the world.*" The more we think of making the world better, the better is our religion. The more we neglect this world through expecting a better world to be provided from on high, the vainer and the more mischievous is our religion. A bishop of Beziers (if the tale in History is true) illustrates this topic by his behavior to his Catholic brethren. The Crusaders who wished to massacre the Albigensian heretics, asked how they were to distinguish them from good Catholics. He replied: "Kill all; God will distinguish his own at the "day of judgment."

(3.) Closely related hereto is the principle, that the less we think of any reward to ourselves in a future life for the performance of duty in this life, the better is our religion; for it ought to teach us, not only that when we hav done our best, we hav failed of much, but that all virtue is its own reward, inasmuch as virtue is man's best state. Greek philosophy more than two millenniums ago, taught, that we must do good *because it is good*, not from expecting extraneous advantage from it;—"in "respect to the recompense of reward."—Heb. xi. 26.

(4.) Again, because Good Action is better than Right Opinion, and Right Loves or Hatreds better than Full

Beliefs, it follows that we must esteem men for their moral worth even when they fail of religious orthodoxy; and we must disesteem the orthodox when they ar deficient in moral worth. Therefor a Creed neither can by its acceptance accredit a saint, nor by its rejection detect a reprobate.

While congregations depend for their instruction on one or at most two men, who may not be contradicted nor answered, some previous intellectual agreement, clearly defined, which may be called a *Creed*, will be required of the teachers by the dumb laity. As Edmund Burke coarsely said, "The freedom of the clergy would "be the slavery of the laity." But the present Congregational routine is not certain to be eternal. The *platform* may hereafter enter the Congregation and be merely organized by its President for free speech. Be this as it may, no Congregation can fill up the received ideal of a Church. Those whose hearts beat together for Virtuous Action and Virtuous Sentiment ar the true Church, even if they be intellectually severed too much for Congregational Union.

Remark was made above on the woful blunder rising out of the ambiguous word Faith. In theory it is insisted that Faith is a moral quality and a test of virtuous character: in practice the Churches merge it in belief of one or more propositions; to which James tartly replies: "The Devils believe and tremble." Endless facts show, that heathens, however dark as to religious opinion, may be truly estimable men. In Paul's words: "Having "not the law, yet by nature they do the deeds of the "law." If possible, we need what a German has called, "The Religion of *Deed*." Jesus himself sets virtuous heathens higher than oppressiv Jews. Every day we see energies that might uproot destitution and demoralization, *diverted into the propagation of a creed.* In Christendom this is a world-wide phenomenon.

I expect that certain writers who do not call themselves Atheists, will taunt me with inconsistency in wishing to make a Dogma of Theism; and it may be worth while here to add a few words on that topic. Morality, so far as it rests upon collectiv mankind, is, ought to be, and must be dogmatic. The same is true of Theism, with the very important distinction, that the highest punishment of immorality is Death, and the highest punishment of Atheism is contempt. The belief in MIND, loftier than man, older than man, and the Creator and Disposer of man, is held by unscientific and even barbarian races; who see it beyond all question in ANIMAL INSTINCTS. Scientific men, since the Newtonian theory has been developed, hav a new demonstration, which, previous to the modern astronomy, was unimagined. The doctrin of GRAVITATION proclaims a Divine Mind ever acting on every particle of matter, so clearly, that a modern scientist who denies it, is as absurd and as little deserving of attention as one who denies the received Geometry of Triangles. Particles of matter in the clouds or in the planets conduct themselves *as if* they knew the precise distance which separates them from other particles in the Earth or Sun, and put forth a million million *tugs* carefully adjusted upon bodies far out of their reach. Newton, no doubt, believed and taught that this mysterious Gravitation was a *Divine force*. To ascribe it to the blind and inert particles *as if* they had *knowledge* of the distance of other particles and there were no higher Mind behind to guide them, degrades a man of Science to the level of a fetish savage in the very lowest stage of the human intellect, and forfeits all right of respect from thoughtful men.

(5.) Though Religion cannot *dictate* Morals any more than it can dictate Philosophy or Science, yet it may and must *uphold* Morals. Just so must every Polity, while

measuring moral right by the judgment of collectiv mankind. We cannot pretend that this judgment will ever be absolutely final; but any modification applies to details chiefly, and in every age is exceptional. Certain broad foundations remain immovable, such as, that Men ar not machines destitute of self-controul; that *because* of this, Praise and Blame, Punishment and Reward, hav their reasonable places; that Moral Interests ar higher than Material; that Virtue is better than Health or Ease; that Self-Sacrifice for others is nobler than Self-seeking: that Justice is of all qualities paramount and indispensable, and is the right of *all* God's creatures.

(6.) Some further hints ar given us in the history of wide-spread religions. These attained reverence and strength for action nearly as did that one which is best known to us,—the Mediæval Christian Church: which strove to bridle the evil tendencies of wayward Power and greedy Wealth; and instead of confining its citizenship to Heaven (*Paul* to *Philipp.* iii. 20) as the first Christians had been forced to do, emphatically became an agent of this world. Instead of treating worldly interests as too transitory to be worthy of struggle, a wise Religion of the Future must turn a blind eye to the fact that earthly interests never can be *strictly* eternal. By accepting them *as if* eternal, we shall better forget Self and better fulfil the task imposed on us by God and Nature. A future religion must not be satisfied with lopping twigs of an evil tree, but must strive to pull up the roots, under the firm belief that in working for good *here*, it is working for *an indefinit futurity*.

Unjust national institutions and depraving national habits ar the deepest and most permanent sources of Moral Evil. Therefor the Catholic Church discerned, that, to be *philanthropic*, a Church must be eminently *political* in her aims and actions. Of course philanthropic

aims degenerate into ambitious schemes when the establishment of the Church *herself* as an organized power is an accepted policy. On this rock our Ideal Church of the Future cannot split, because, having no defined creed, she cannot hav corporate organization, nor fixed existence in any visible form. Good men and women will, as in the past, but more cordially and widely than in the past, recognize each other, being thrown together in action, while striving for a common good. God has so formed our hearts, that Compassion and Justice in the millions of mankind ar *stronger* than base cupidity; hence to the voice of one who calls for Justice, the heart of every nation responds. Therefor the pure, the tender, the noble and ennobling passions in the long run overpower Injustice and Sensuality: the Woman in us is stronger than the Man. Therefor also,—though not in a year, not without lengthy struggle to enlighten the multitude,—yet more and more, as new generations rise, Religion will shake herself free from enfeebling tradition and become more conscious of her true duties, more able to execute them. Thus we shall approximate to the ideal of Glory to God, Peace among men, Kindliness to all God's creatures.

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